



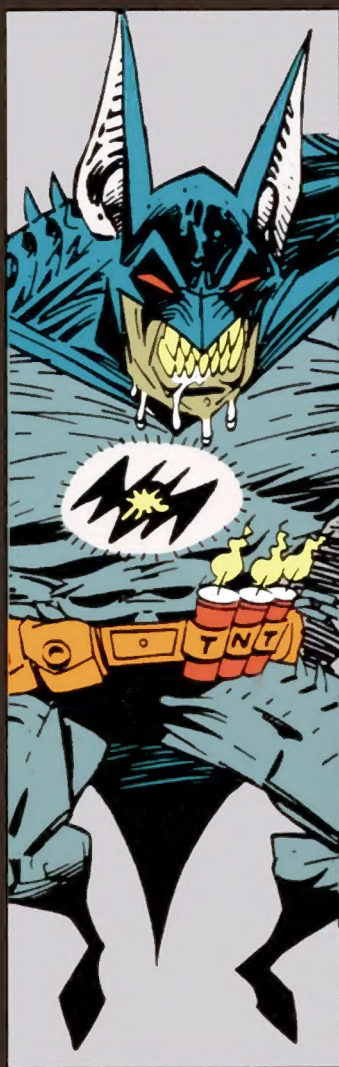
BATMAN[®]

Collected Legends of the

DARK KNIGHT[®]



BOLLAND



Since its inception **BATMAN: LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT** has presented some of the most interesting and thought-provoking adventures of the Batman. This collection includes some of the shorter story arcs that originally appeared in that book.

BLADES, written by James Robinson and illustrated by Tim Sale.

LEGENDS OF THE DARK MITE, by Alan Grant and Kevin O'Neill.

HOTHOUSE, by John Francis Moore and P. Craig Russell.

Three different interpretations of the Batman by three creative teams.

Collected Legends of the Dark Knight.

**BATMAN:
COLLECTED LEGENDS
OF THE DARK KNIGHT**

**James Robinson
John Francis Moore
Alan Grant**
Writers



**Tim Sale
P. Craig Russell
Kevin O'Neill**
Artists



**Willie Schubert
Bill Pearson
John Workman**
Letterers



**Steve Oliff
Digital Chameleon
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Colorists

Batman Created by Bob Kane



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BATMAN:

COLLECTED LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT

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James Robinson / Tim Sale

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Alan Grant / Kevin O'Neill

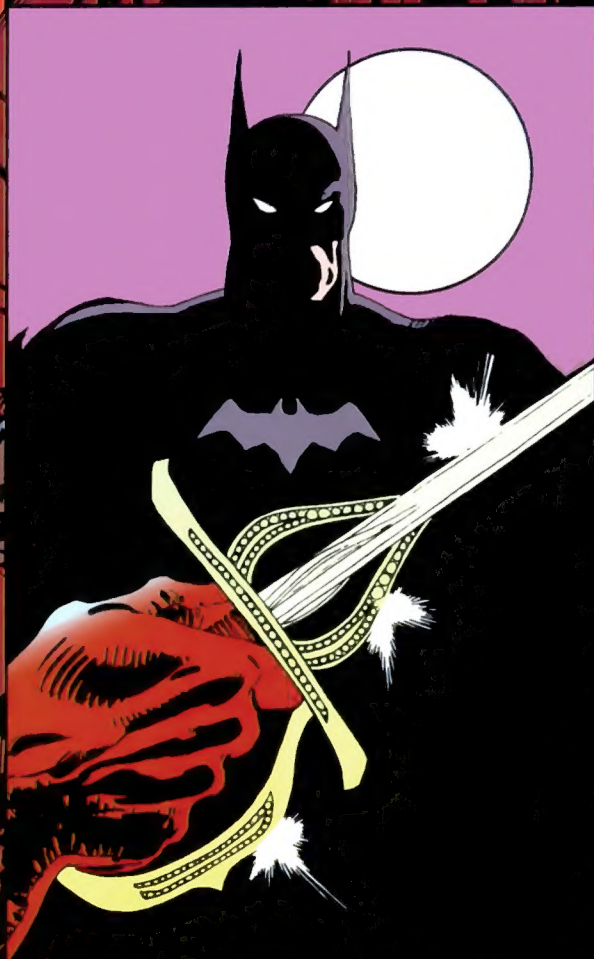
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HOTHOUSE

John Francis Moore / P. Craig Russell

(originally presented in **BATMAN: LEGENDS
OF THE DARK KNIGHT 42-43**)



BLADES

Robinson ▼ Sale

Bacon.

The killing smell of bacon.
-And eggs and coffee.
-They'd been cooking breakfast
when the murderer struck.
-Bullets fired from a long-range
rifle meant food left uneaten.



Now, mere hours later, all that's left
of the couple whose home this was...
...who lived here and breathed here
and loved each other here...
...all that's left is dried blood, chalk
outlines and the lingering odor of
pork bellies.

The killer revealed his
name, in one of many
messages to the police,
as Mr. Lime.

And Mr. Lime is
killing old people.



Tonight.

My night. My
gala premiere.

Never again will I be just a name on the credits... way down the credits... a name without a face.

My costume's pressed and perfect.

And oh... my sword is sharp.

The world is overpopulated. That is a fact.

Mr. Lime sees this fact as a problem--for which he has the solution. Euthanasia for the old--with anyone over sixty-three a target.
-The couple whose morning was just ruined were both 65. Their age was their destruction.

Yet everything else about Lime's selection of victims seems arbitrary.
-Al Murrow, 67, security guard. A bomb was left in his office.
-Emily Conrad, 64, cosmetic surgeon. Her car was forced over the edge of a cliff-side road.
-Proof that neither sex nor professional standing is a factor.

Nor wealth, for that matter. Another couple, Roderick and Caroline Dewhurst, 77 and 73, killed in their expensive Oakvale mansion.
-(He got in close for that one... slit their throats.)
-While Millie Cooper, 74, a bag lady was run over at an intersection.

Lime's messages say he's honing his talents. First Gotham. Then America. Then the world... a world where no one is too old and no place too crowded.

That's Mr. Lime's dream.
-But I'm his nightmare. Or will be when I catch him.

COFFEE, SIR?

NO, ALFRED, THANK YOU.

TEA?
NO.

I PRESUME MILK AND COOKIES ARE OUT OF THE QUESTION.

So without further ado...

Lights...

Camera...

Action...

YOUR MONEY... GIVE IT.

YOU SCREAM... YOU DIE.



EN
GARDE!

BLADES

Part One

—BY—
James Robinson · STORY Tim Sale · ART
WILLIE SCHUBERT · letters STEVE OLIFF · color
ARCHIE GOODWIN & BILL KAPLAN · editors



The city at night.

WHAT?

SHOOT!



Street lamps
become
spotlights.

SWORD...
WATCH I--

GU--

Walls become
projection screens.

The scenario's rich
in drama. Rich.

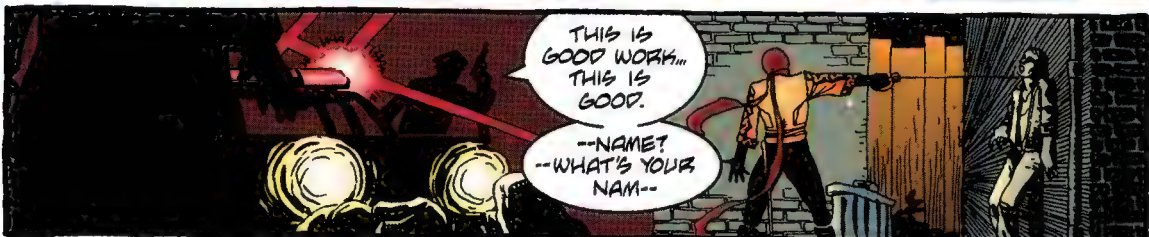
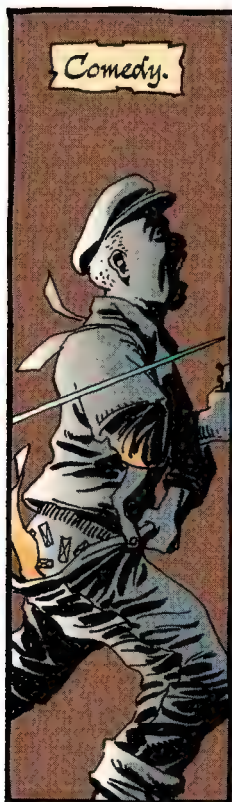


Heroic deeds.

CUT.

RUN...

NO, MY
FRIENDS...
YOU'RE NOT
GOING ANY-
WHERE.



THE
CIGARETTES
AND COFFEE
MIX FIERY-
SWEET IN HIS
MOUTH.



HE SIGHS. THE PAST WEEK
FOR JAMES GORDON HAS
NOT GONE WELL.

A NEW COSTUMED VIGILANTE.
THIS ONE WIELDING A SWORD, NO
LESS. A PROBLEM...POSSIBLY.

WITH CRIME ON THE INCREASE,
AS EVER, AS EVER. WITH
BATMAN NOT DOING HIS
SHARE.

HIS SHARE?--
GORDON SMILES.
HOW QUICKLY HE'S
COME TO RELY ON
BATMAN'S EFFORTS.



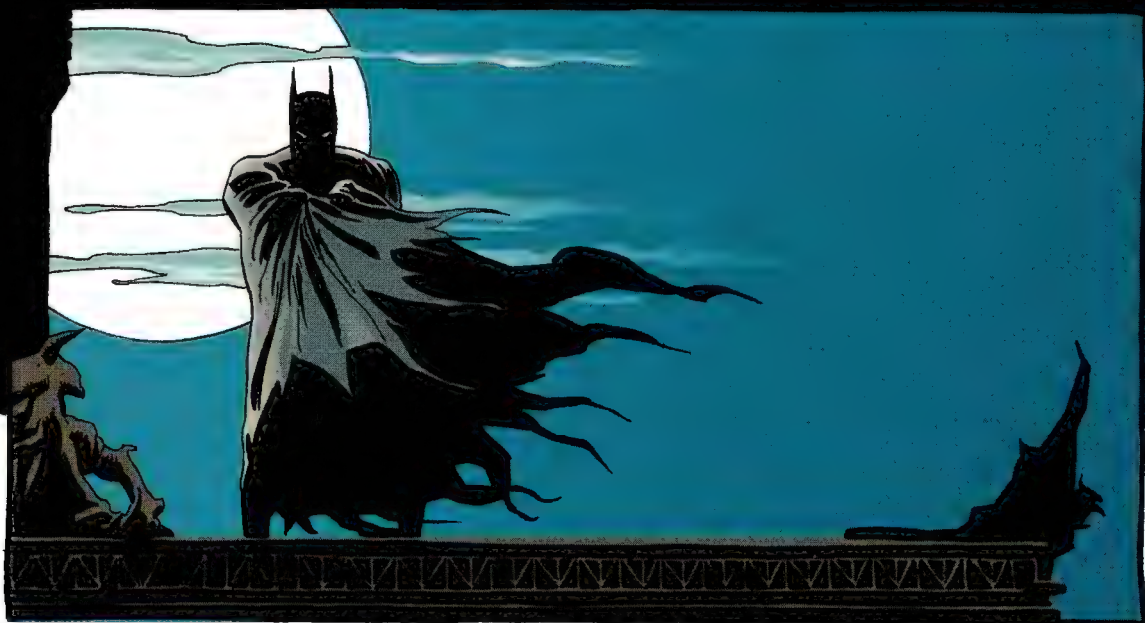
BUT NO LONGER,
IT SEEMS. FOR
BATMAN NOW, IT'S
MISTER LIME,
MISTER LIME.
NOTHING ELSE
CONCERNS HIM...
AND THE CITY
SUFFERS.



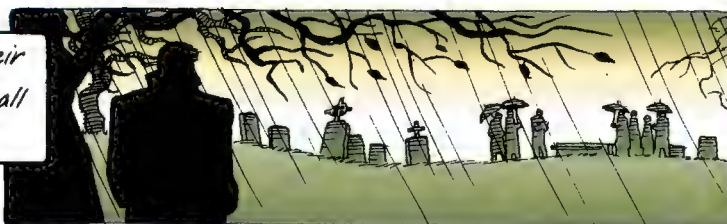
WHY DOES THIS
CASE DRIVE...
TORMENT HIM
SO?

WHY?

Lime's
victims...



I saw their funerals. Sad--as all funerals are.



But as Batman, I met those the murdered had left behind. Orphans... though middle-aged--and most with families of their own. Yet...

Their grief--mixed with anger--confusion. I saw they hurt--the same way I still do.

Al Murrow's daughter--and her tears.

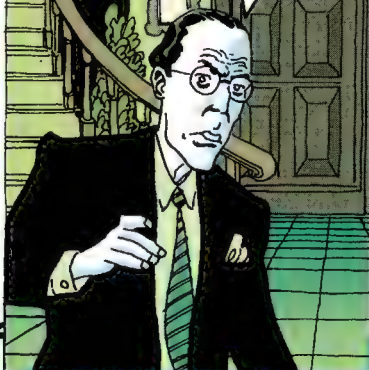
IT WAS SUCH A SHOCK. H...HEARING HOW THEY DIED. SO VIOLENT.



The Dewhursts' son--his rage

"SO TERRIBLY VIOLENT.

PLEASE FIND WHO EVER DID THIS.

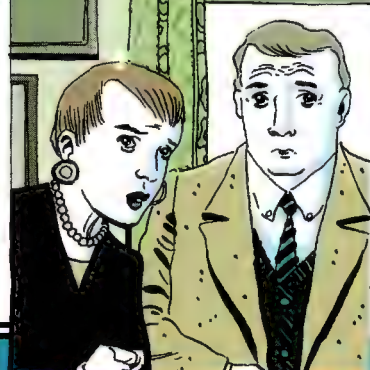


I will find you, Lime.

The Litvaks' children--their pain.

"FIND THIS MANIAC."

WE'RE BEGGING YOU.

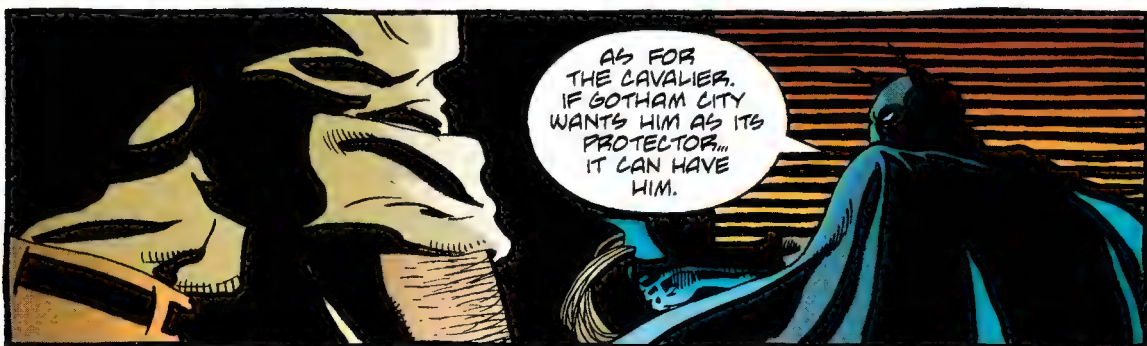
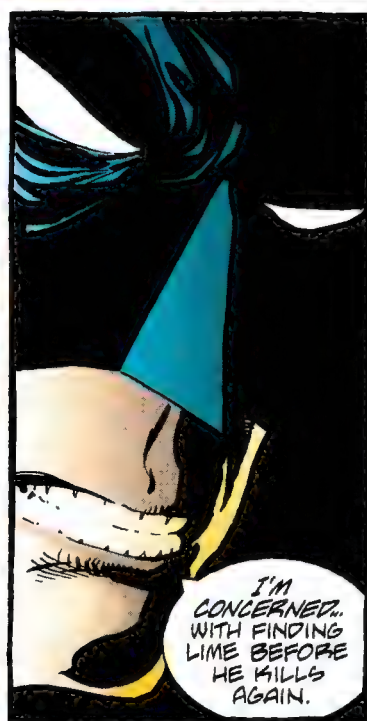


You'll know grief. I promise.

Lime.

Lime.

Lime.



DAYS PASS. WITH SOME THINGS CHANGING... AND OTHERS NOT.

FOR GORDON, IT'S STILL TOO MUCH CRIME AND TOO MANY CIGARETTES.

FOR BATMAN IT'S STILL A KILLER WHO REFUSES TO LEAVE CLUES OR BE CAUGHT.

BUT FOR MOST OF GOTHAM THERE IS ONE NEW ELEMENT TO THEIR LIVES... A NEW CHAMPION.

QUICK WITH A SWORD?

DROP THE JEWELS, OLD BOY... BEFORE I'M FORCED TO DEPRIVE YOU OF YOURS.

QUICK WITH A SMILE.

AND QUICK TO CAPTURE THE PUBLIC'S HEART.

"THE SWORD-WIELDING NEWCOMER IS LAUDED BY THE PUBLIC... MANY OF WHOM FELT BATMAN'S DARK IMAGE WAS TOO..."

"...MUCH-NEEDED FORCE FOR GOOD ESPECIALLY OF LATE, BATMAN IS SO SELDOM SEEN."

WHY DO I DO IT? TO MEET LOVELY LADIES SUCH AS YOURS-

BATMAN...WHO NEEDS HIM? THE SWORDSMAN... WHAT'S HIS NAME? HE'S THE ONE I LIKE.

FOR INFORMATION AND GOSSIP ON THAT SEXXY SWASHBUCKLER...

...DIAL 900 228 5437 CAV LIER

"...FAN CLUBS ARE ALREADY STARTING UP..."

THAT MOUSTACHE... THOSE EYES... WHAT A HUN--

More killings.

Clement Pope, 69. Again the high-powered rifle.

Phoebe Lowe, 76. Again the hit and run.

No clues. No leads. No witnesses.

MISTER LIME. WHO IS HE? WHERE IS HE?

DON'T KNOW...

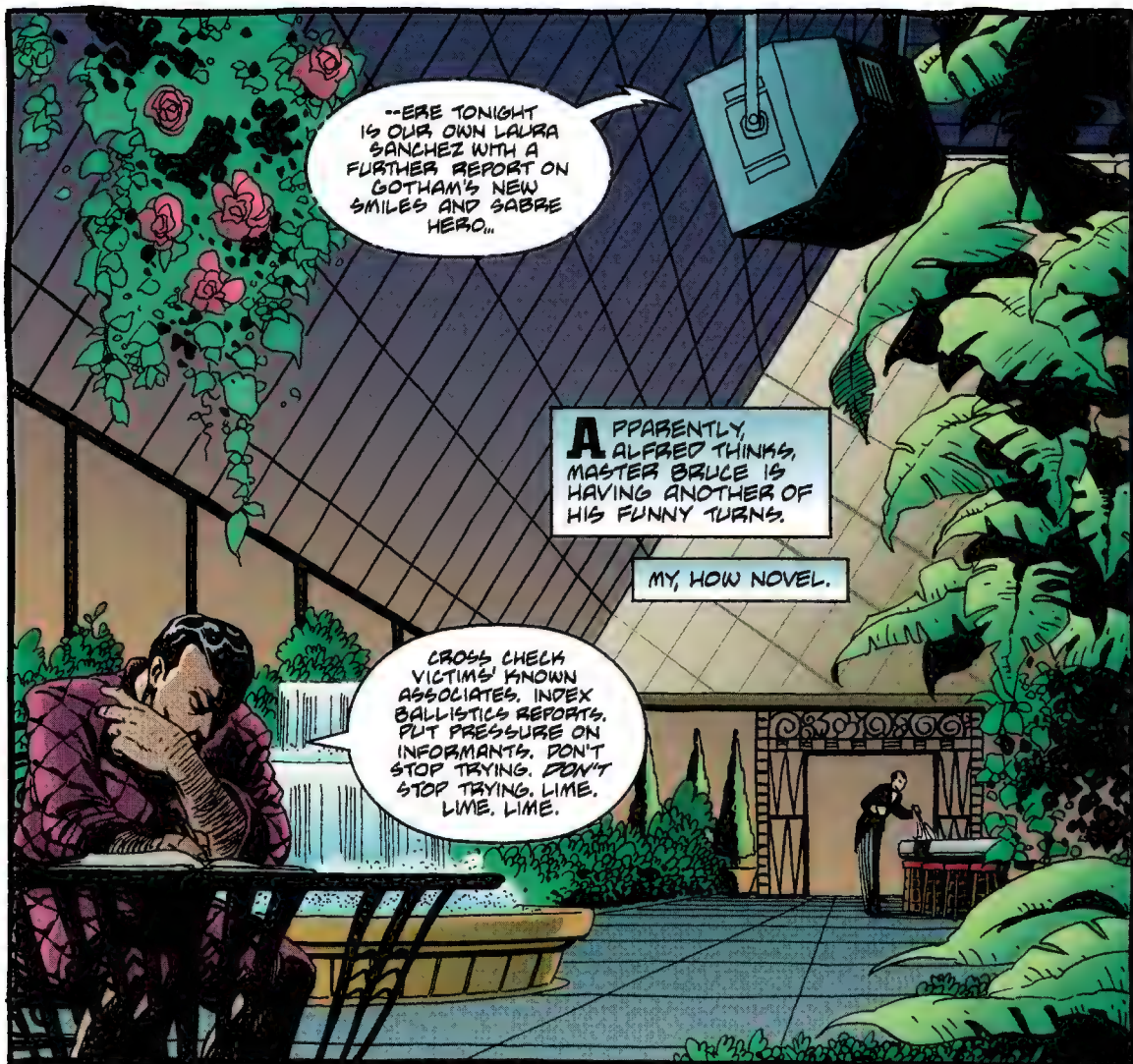
TALK... LIME?...WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD?

"NOTHIN'... HONEST! NOTHIN' AT ALL..."

No link between the victims. Nothing to go on.

But I'll win. I must. -No more killings, Lime. No more tears. Too sad. -Too sad.

DAYS PASS.



--ERE TONIGHT
IS OUR OWN LAURA
SANCHEZ WITH A
FURTHER REPORT ON
GOTHAM'S NEW
SMILES AND SABRE
HERO...

APPARENTLY,
ALFRED THINKS
MASTER BRUCE IS
HAVING ANOTHER OF
HIS FUNNY TURNS.

MY, HOW NOVEL.

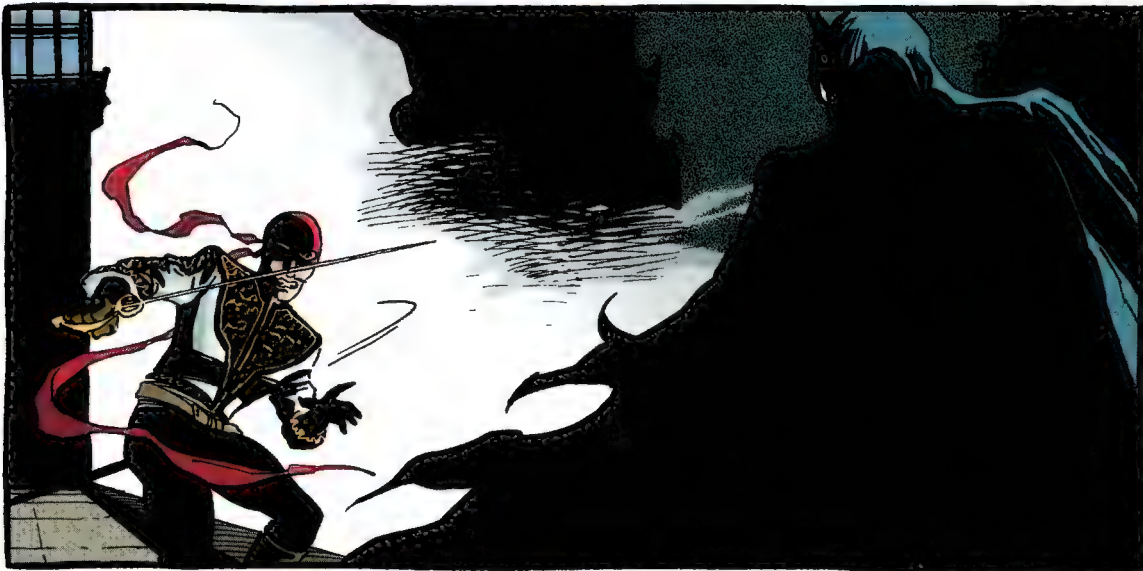
CROSS CHECK
VICTIMS' KNOWN
ASSOCIATES. INDEX
BALLISTICS REPORTS.
PUT PRESSURE ON
INFORMANTS. DON'T
STOP TRYING. DON'T
STOP TRYING. LIME.
LIME. LIME.

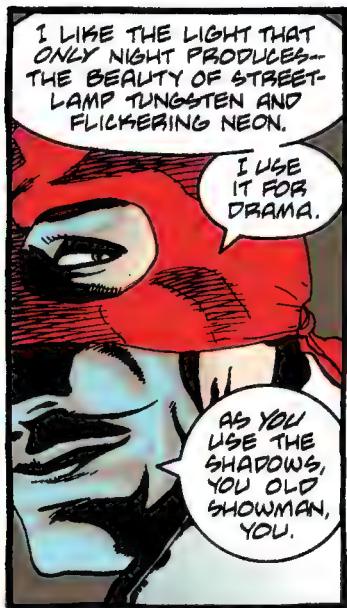
ALTHOUGH
A VIGILANTE
AND TECHNICALLY
OUTSIDE THE LAW, IT
WOULD APPEAR FROM
THE WAY HE FREELY
CONDUCTS INTERVIEWS
AND CONSORTS WITH
THE PUBLIC,
THAT--

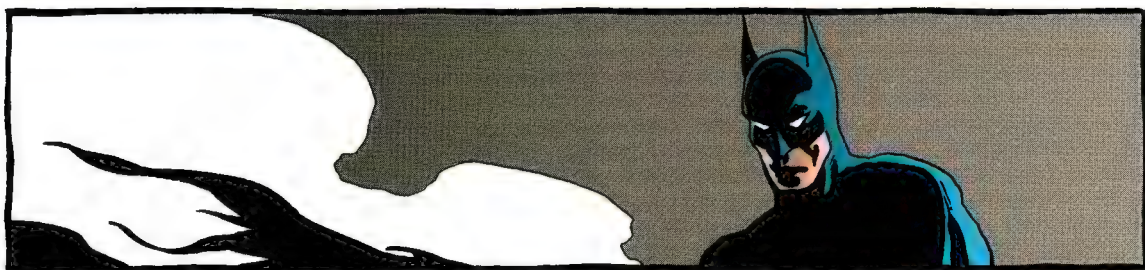
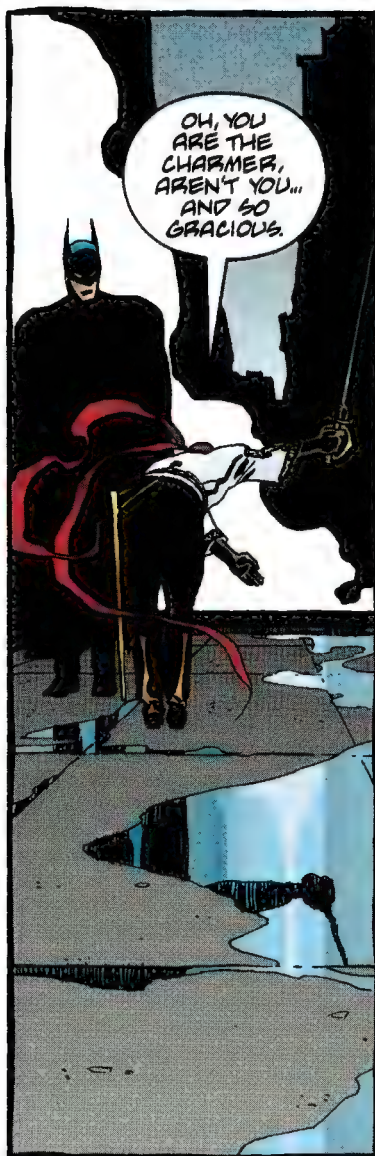
--LIKE
THE BATMAN'S
ACTIVITIES--THE
POLICE ARE
TURNING A BLIND
EYE TO THOSE
OF THE
CAVALIER.

OF COURSE, ALFRED
MUSES BETWEEN
FLICKS OF HIS DUSTER,
DESPITE MASTER
BRUCE'S CURRENT
PREOCCUPATIONS, A
MEETING BETWEEN
THEM...









The plan is going perfectly.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! INTRODUCING... HUDSON PYLE, STUNTMAN EXTRAORDINAIRE.

THERE'S NOTHING HE CAN'T DO WITH HIS SWORD OR HIS BODY. EVERY GESTURE AND MOVEMENT HE MAKES IS AN ARTWORK.

HE'S FAST. HE'S STRONG. AND YES, HIS TEETH ARE NATURALLY THAT WHITE.

Perfectly.

THE PLAN... TO CREATE THE PERSONA OF THE CAVALIER.

BECOME THE PUBLIC'S PROTECTING HERO... THE TOAST OF GOTHAM... KNOWN NATIONWIDE. AND THEN... WHEN ENJOYING A PEAK IN POPULARITY, TO REVEAL HIS IDENTITY.

HUDSON PYLE BECOMES THE NAME ON EVERYONE'S LIPS

...and I kickstart my transition from stunt work to starring roles in action films.

PERFECTLY. THE PLAN IS GOING PERFECTLY.

Or rather, it was.

I didn't count on how I'd feel. Matching wits and wiles and sword and strength... with real-life criminals on real-life streets.

The sensation of life and death, here and now. It's so vital... immediate. It's such... such... a charge.

Electric. Beyond words.

Now that I've experienced it... can I give it up?

He's struck again.

IT'S AUTUMN AND CHILL - OR RATHER, IT WAS.

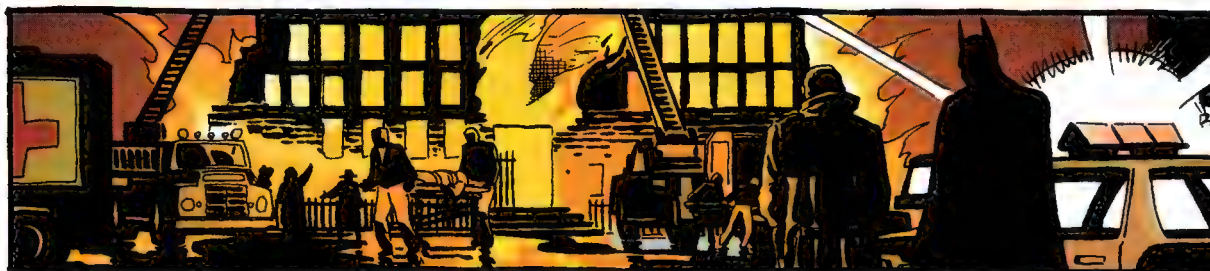
IN THE LAST WEEK, IT'S WARMED A LITTLE.

M R. LIME IS MAKING IT HOTTER STILL.

An old people's home.

All the occupants are out.
-At their age more than a few are
sick with smoke, but God knows
it could have been worse.

The roof begins to
go. We pull back.
Leave it to the
professionals...



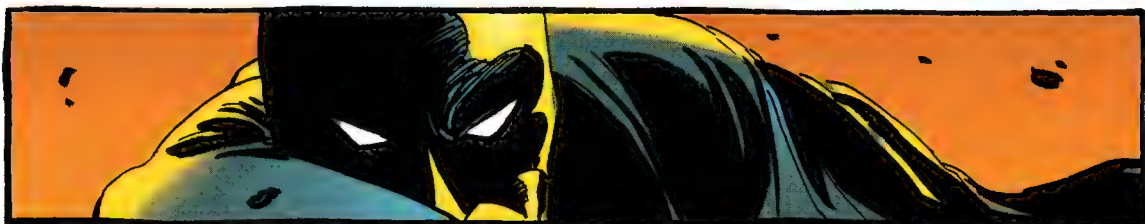
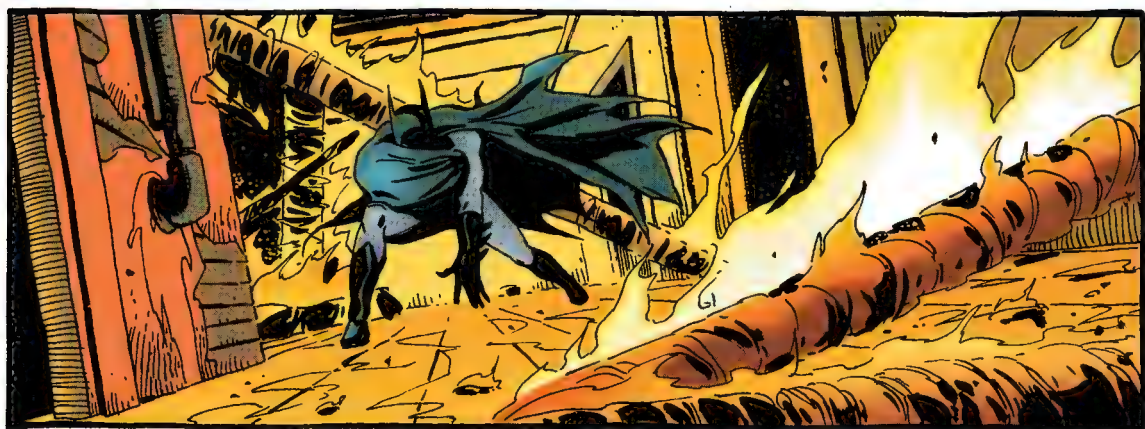
CAPTAIN!

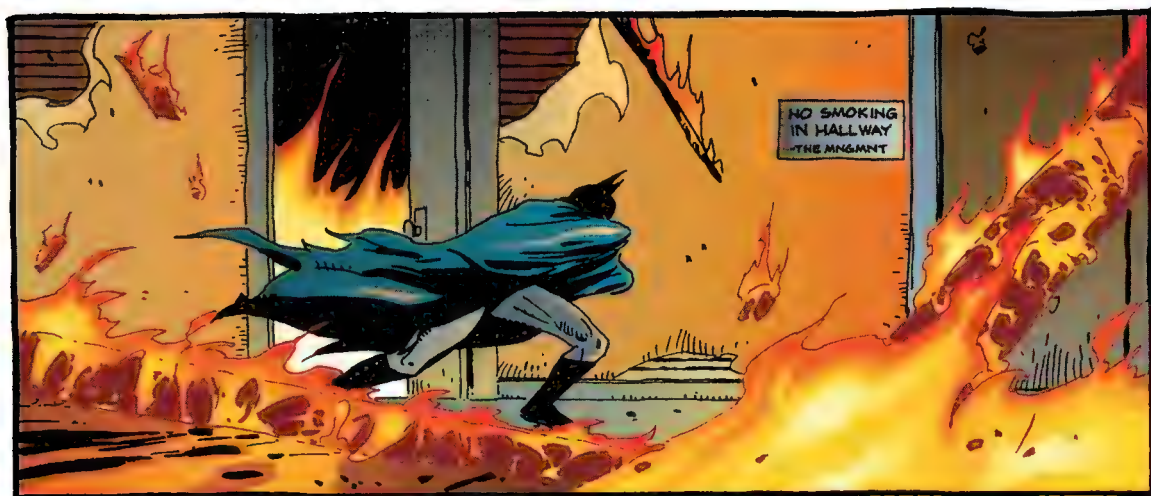
...in a
perfect
world.

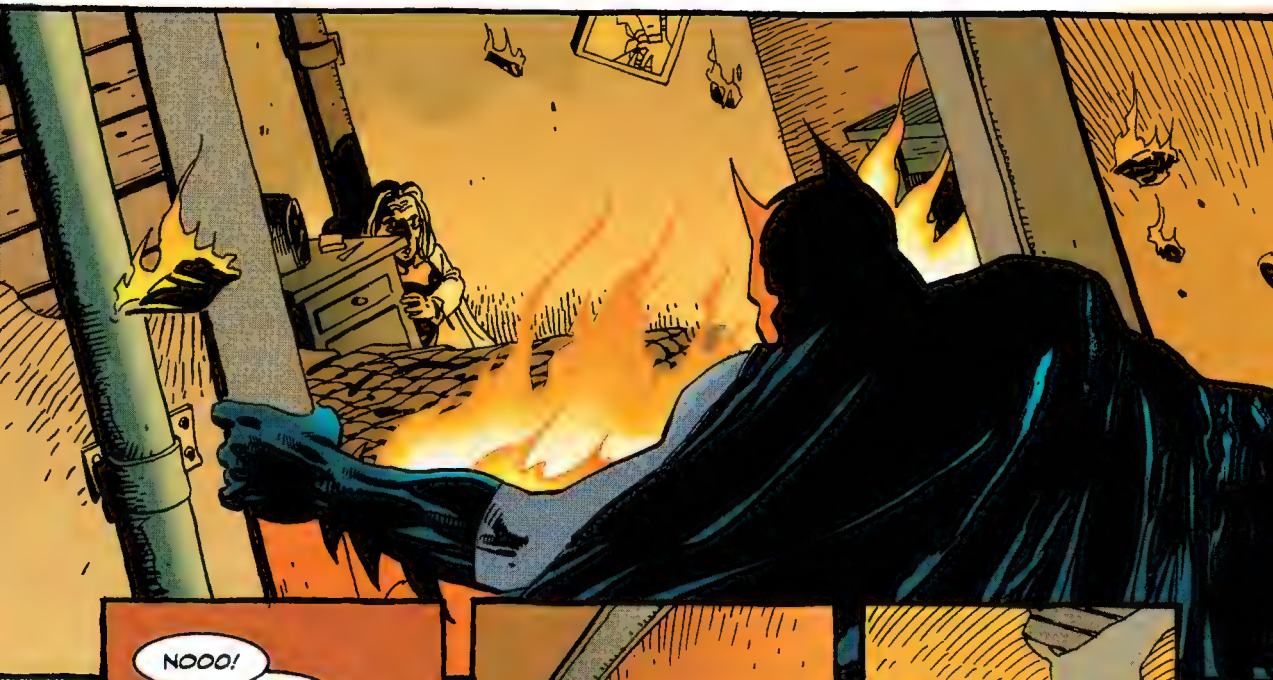
HEAD COUNT...
COMES UP ONE
SHY, AFTER
ALL.

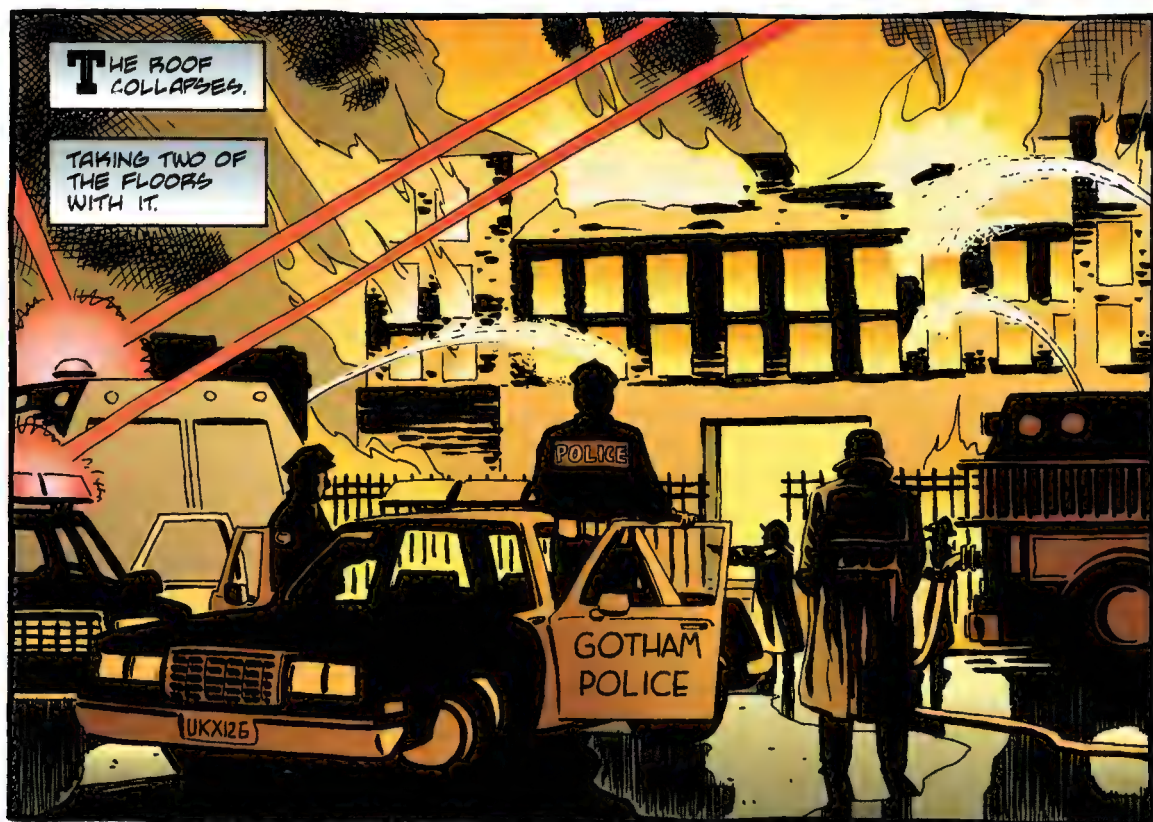
POOR
SOUL MUST'A
FRIED BY
NOW.











THE ROOF
COLLAPSES.

TAKING TWO OF
THE FLOORS
WITH IT.



IT'S OVER, GORDON THINKS.
BATMAN'S FINISHED



SO SOON... TOO SOON.
I THOUGHT... REALLY
THOUGHT HE'D BE
AROUND FOR LONGER
THAN TH--



CRASH!



A SAVIOR DEMON
ESCAPES FROM
HELL.

TO THE SOUND
OF BREAKING
GLASS.

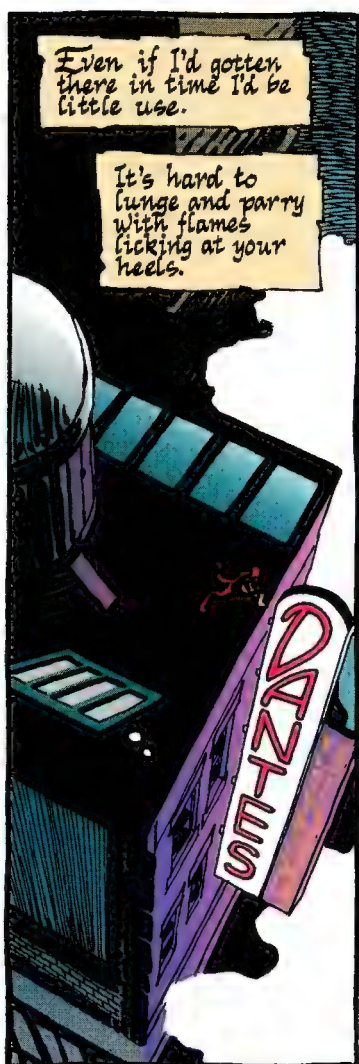
...AND CRIES OF
DISBELIEF.

THE LEGEND
GROWS.



HE WAS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN WHEN HE LEARNED OF THE FIRE.

WITH THE NEWS THAT THE BLAZE WAS IN HAND... AND THAT BATMAN WAS ON THE SCENE.



Even if I'd gotten there in time I'd be little use.

It's hard to lunge and parry with flames licking at your heels.



Funny... from here the glow looks almost beautiful.

A beacon in the night.



Anyway... I've crimes to stop and bows to take.

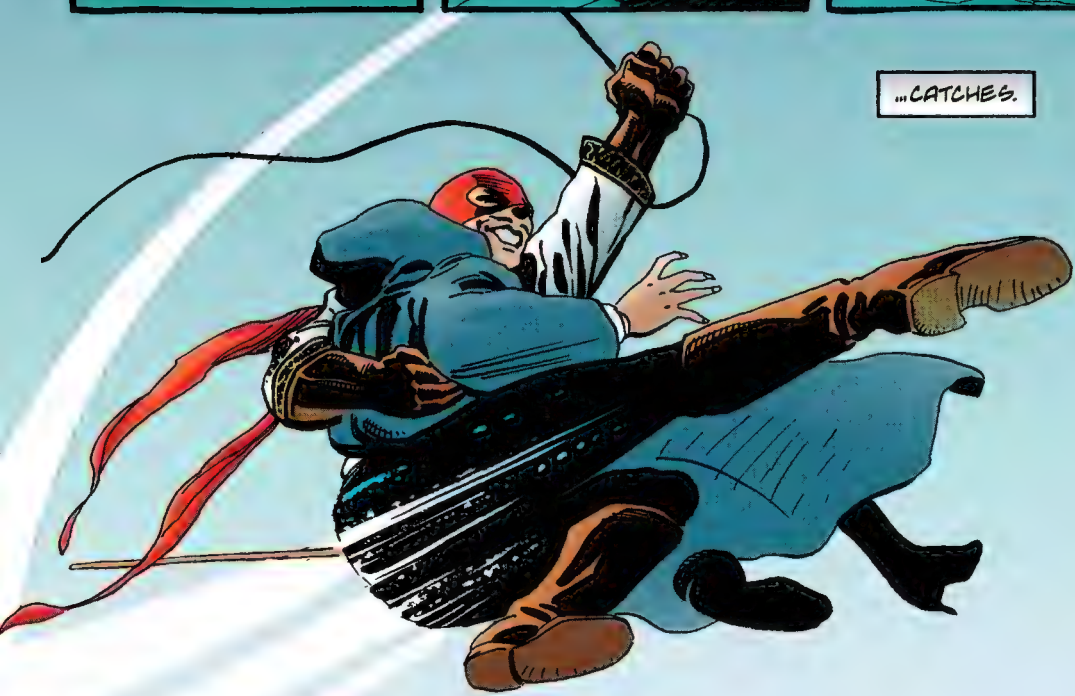
And the rush to enjo--



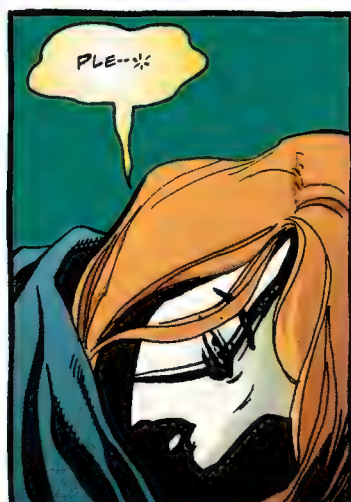
THE CORNER OF HIS EYE...



...CATCHES
SOMETHING
ON THE
BRIDGE.



...CATCHES.



To be continued.



She's a
murderess.

Ellen is a
murderess...and
I love her.

YOU...

YOU'VE RUINED
YOUR LIFE. YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE...
I'M NOT WORTH--

HUSH. NO
MORE TALK LIKE
THIS.

I DID
WHAT'S DONE...
PAST
TENSE.

--OTHAM CITY
IS STILL IN SHOCK
FROM LAST NIGHT'S DRAMATIC
ROOFTOP REVELATION OF THE
CAVALIER'S DOUBLE LIFE
AS BURGLAR AND
JEWEL THI--



YES, WHAT
YOU DID FOR ME... A
KILLER! I MURDERED
MY HUSBAND... I...

NO, NO, NO...

YOUR
HUSBAND BEAT
YOU... ABUSED
YOU...

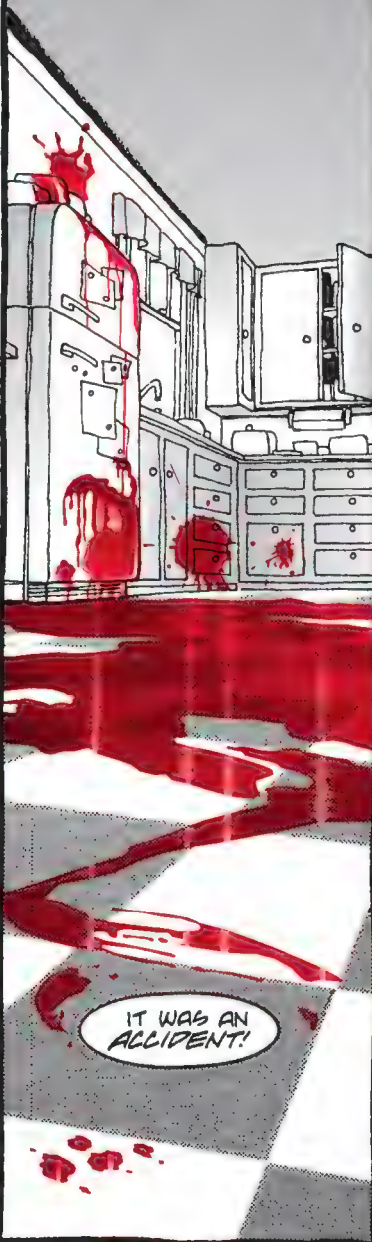
YES...
HE DID...
WAS--

SO WEALTHY
HE COULD HAVE YOU
WATCHED CONSTANTLY.
ESCAPE FROM HIM
WAS IMPOSSIBLE. HE
WOULDN'T GIVE YOU
A DIVORCE...

...SO
YOU KILLED
HIM.

NO... NO IT
WASN'T LIKE THAT,
NOT COLD AND MATTER-
OF-FACT. IT WAS DURING
ONE OF HIS BEATINGS, I
DARED TO STRIKE HIM
BACK FOR THE FIRST
TIME...

I REMEMBER
HIS FACE... THE
EXPRESSION OF SHOCK
TURNING TO FURY. I
THOUGHT HE WAS GOING
TO KILL ME. I RAN TO
THE KITCHEN... GRABBED
A KNIFE... HE CHARGED...
IMPALED HIMSELF
ON IT.



YES, WELL,
LIKE I SAY, IT'S ALL
IN THE PAST TENSE...
HISTORY.

IF ONLY
SALT HADN'T BEEN A
GUEST WITH YOU AT
THE TIME.

SALT... SALT...
HAD EVERYONE IN
MY HUSBAND'S CIRCLE
FOOLED... THEY ALL
THOUGHT HIM CHARMING.
BUT ME... I KNEW HE
WAS NO GOOD. I
KNEW.

ANYWAY, HE'D
WORN OUT HIS
WELCOME IN A COUPLE
OF PLACES AND
TALKED HIS WAY INTO
MY HUSBAND'S GUEST
HOUSE.

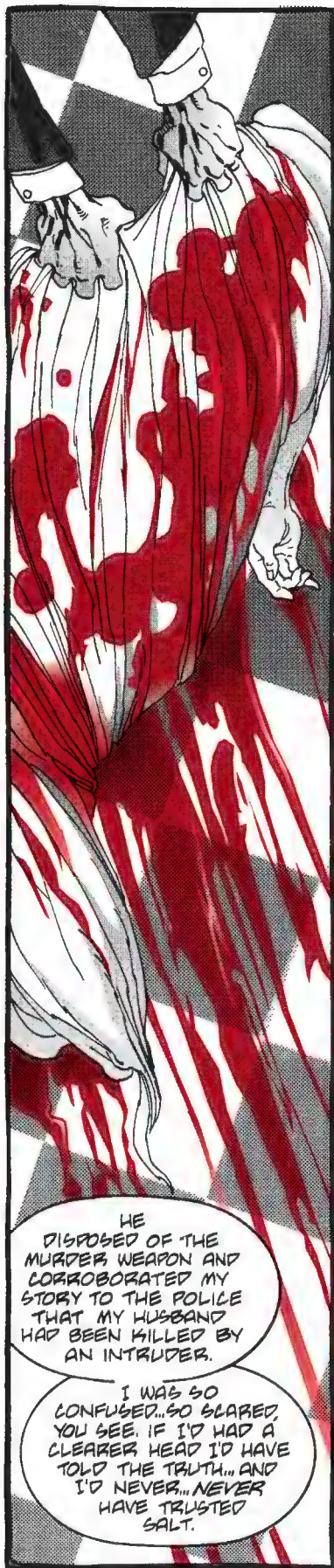
HE'D ENTERED
OUR HOME WITHOUT
OUR KNOWLEDGE... SO
LATE THAT I'M SURE
HE WAS PROWLING
AROUND LOOKING FOR
THINGS TO STEAL...

INSTEAD--

HE SAW
YOU KILL YOUR
HUSBAND.

HE KNEW
I DETESTED HIM.
I WAS AMAZED
WHEN HE OFFERED
TO HELP ME
CONCEAL THE
CRIME.





HE
DISPOSED OF THE
MURDER WEAPON AND
CORROBORATED MY
STORY TO THE POLICE
THAT MY HUSBAND
HAD BEEN KILLED BY
AN INTRUDER.

I WAS SO
CONFUSED...SO SCARED,
YOU SEE. IF I'D HAD A
CLEARER HEAD I'D HAVE
TOLD THE TRUTH...AND
I'D NEVER...NEVER
HAVE TRUSTED
SALT.

BUT YOU DID
AND SALT BEGAN
HIS BLACKMAIL
DEMANDS.

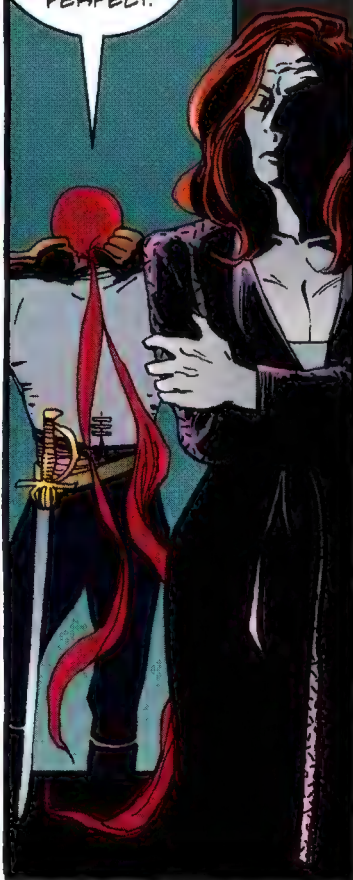
HED KEPT
THE KNIFE...COVERED
WITH MY FINGERPRINTS
AND MY HUSBAND'S
BLOOD.

NOW...MY
BANK ACCOUNT'S
EMPTY. AND I FEAR
HE'LL EXPOSE ME
ANYWAY FOR THE
SHEER SPITE
OF IT.

NO...BETTER
TO DIE THAN GIVE
HIM THE SATISFACTION.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT...
THAT'S WHY I WAS ON
THE BRIDGE...

YES,
WELL, WE ALL
MAKE MISTAKES...
THE WRONG
CHOICES.

MY
HANDLING
OF ALL THIS
HAS BEEN
FAR FROM
PERFECT.



I DEMANDED
THE KNIFE FROM
SALT...THREATENED
HIM. BUT HIS LAWYER
HAS THE WEAPON,
WITH INSTRUCTIONS
TO TURN IT OVER
TO THE POLICE IF
ANYTHING HAPPENED
TO SALT.

IF I'D BEEN THE
THINKER BATMAN IS, I'D HAVE
WORKED OUT A WAY TO GET
THE EVIDENCE. NO...ME, I'M
JUST A STUPID SMILE AND
A STUPID SWORD.

SO WHEN
SALT SUGGESTED A WAY
I COULD "EARN" THE EVIDENCE
BY COMMITTING A SERIES OF
JEWEL THEFTS...I AGREED.





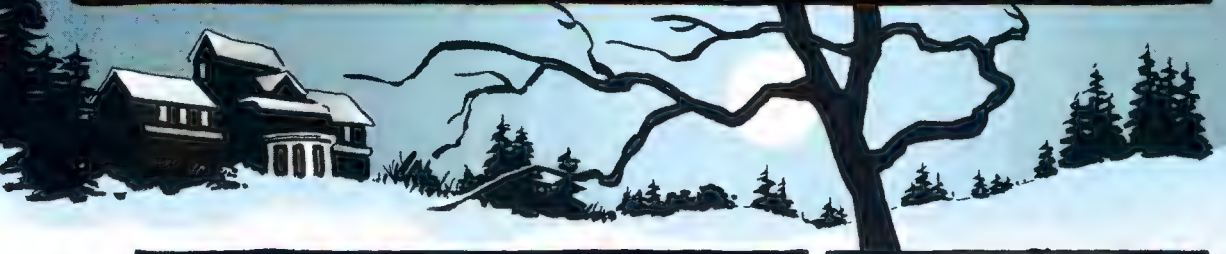
AND NOW
I'M A WANTED
CRIMINAL...

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND...
YOU'VE DONE ALL
THIS...AND ASKED
NOTHING...NOTHING
OF ME.

I love you,
Ellen...from
the first
moment I saw
you. And
maybe...when
you're free,
and the
stupid sorry
mess is over
with...

...I'll tell you.

I'LL
BE BACK.



BUT I
HAVE TO GET
UP...KEEP
WORKI--

NO!...NO!...
WILL YOU LISTEN
TO ME, YOU'RE
SICK!

THE WORRY,
THE SELF-NEGLECT, NOT
TO MENTION THE EXPLODING
STAGE AND THE BAT-GYRO
CRASHING. THEY'VE MADE
YOU ILL... YOU'VE MADE
YOURSELF ILL.



YOU NEED
TO RECOVER...LIE BACK,
CLOSE YOUR EYES.

BESIDES,
I'VE GOT MY
SOAPS TO
WATCH.



SO
REST NOW,
BRUCE...

I chase the bad men... catch them. It's what I do. It's what I must.

Why can't I catch this one?

Feel so weak. So hot, molten hot... and helpless like the boy I was.

Remember, father. The scared boy you loved and comforted.

The bad men chased me... then, when I was sick as children are. Chased me through fevered nightmares... with a sword and a snarl and Basil Rathbone's face.

A sword... like Cavaliers. He, bad man too... betraying my hope... my trust.

A memory of a cherished past.

But he saved me. Father... he did that much. So not... maybe not all bad. Could have cut me where I lay.

What was it he said?...

I COULD KILL YOU NOW... KILL YOU FACE TO FACE MAKE SURE YOU WERE DEAD... THAT I WAS SAFE FROM YOU.

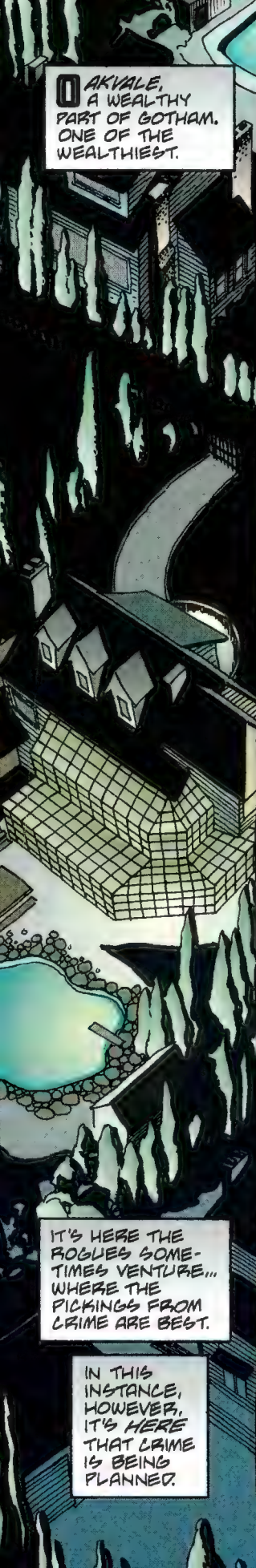
IF... I WAS A MURDERER.

Like Mister Lime.

If--

I KNOW...

...WHO MISTER LIME IS.



OAKVALE,
A WEALTHY
PART OF GOTHAM.
ONE OF THE
WEALTHIEST.



THE CRIME...
ANOTHER
KILLING BY
MISTER LIME.



YOU
OVERPLAYED
YOUR HAND..

IT'S HERE THE
ROGUES SOME-
TIMES VENTURE...
WHERE THE
PICKINGS FROM
CRIME ARE BEST.

IN THIS
INSTANCE,
HOWEVER,
IT'S HERE
THAT CRIME
IS BEING
PLANNED.



...DEWHURST.

YOUR MURDERS SEEMED RANDOM... NO PATTERN TO THEM. IF YOU'D STOPPED EARLIER, I MIGHT NOT HAVE SEEN THEIR LINK.

ALL THE KILLINGS... THE LONG-RANGE RIFLES, THE BOMBS AND CROSSBOWS, ALL KILLINGS FROM A DISTANCE, KILLINGS WHERE YOU WERE MORE CONCERNED WITH ELUDING CAPTURE THAN WITH THE MURDERS, THEMSELVES.

THE ONE TIME... THE ONLY TIME YOU GOT IN CLOSE.

...WAS WHEN YOU KILLED YOUR OWN PARENTS.

...CUT THEIR THROATS... MADE SURE THEY WERE DEAD YOU HAD TO... FOR THE MONEY... TO INHERIT THEIR MONEY.

I'M IMPRESSED.

He's too calm, collected... collecting his thoughts.

The gun isn't loaded. He knows it... and he knows I know.

THE REST OF THE KILLINGS...

...AND THE PERSONA OF MISTER LIME, HATER OF THE AGED...

He's thinking "Batman's so far away. Can I load and fire before he reaches me?"

...WERE JUST A SMOKE SCREEN. OTHERWISE YOU'D HAVE BEEN THE OBVIOUS SUSPECT FOR YOUR PARENT'S DEATHS.

And he's right. I am so far away.

I'LL SAY ONE THING.

INDEED?

YOU'RE A GREAT ACTOR.

And my legs are weak... my head hurts...

And it is so hard to move.

I BELIEVED YOUR GRIEF AND RAGE. I BELIEVED YOU WERE A MOURNING SON.

INSTEAD OF THE COMMON KILLER YOU ARE!

Hmmm...

WELL, NOW YOU KNOW, THE QUESTION IS...

Can I reach him?

...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?



*Can't think about
how I feel.*

*Focus...my vision
doubling...blurring...
can't let it--*



*Can't think
about--*

*Have to
move.*



Move.

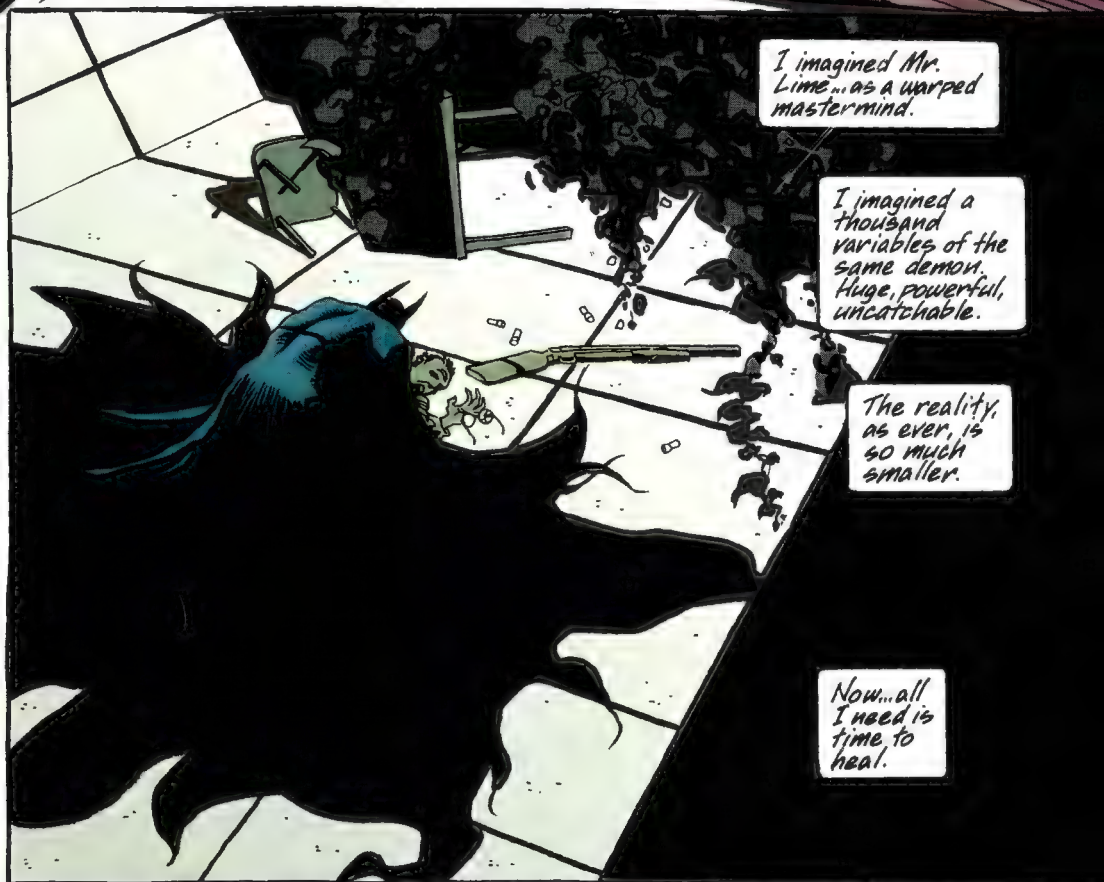


*He's scared...
fumbling...*

*Makes him slow
to load.*



...saves my life.

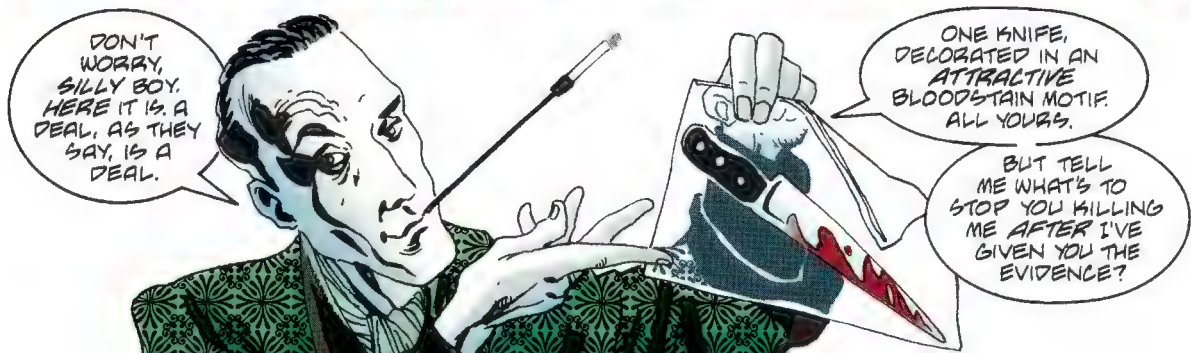


I imagined Mr. Lime... as a warped mastermind.

I imagined a thousand variables of the same demon. Huge, powerful, uncatchable.

The reality, as ever, is so much smaller.

Now...all I need is time to heal.





ROGET
THERE, YOUR
PROTECTION...AND
THE FACT THAT
I'M A GENTLEMAN,
ONE WHO HONORS
HIS
AGREEMENTS.

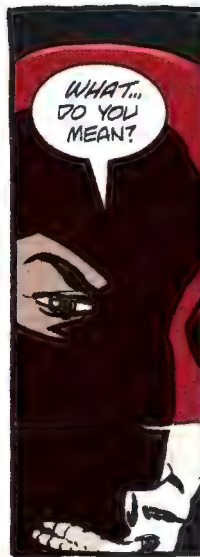


VERY
ASHLEY
WILKES, I'M
SURE.



GOD, BUT I'M
THANKFUL I WON'T
HAVE TO SEE YOU
AGAIN.

LET'S
HOPE.



WHAT...
DO YOU
MEAN?

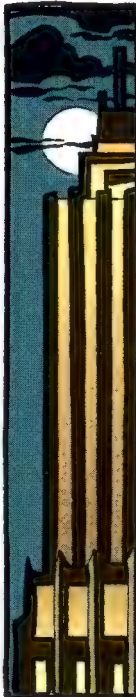


WELL, I'M
STILL A WITNESS
TO ELLEN'S
CRIME. MY
TESTIMONY COULD
STILL GET
QUESTIONS
ASKED.

WHO KNOWS...
IF FUNDS RUN
SHORT...



...I MAY
HAVE TO
"CALL" ON HER
IN THE
FUTURE.



TWO
THINGS,
SALT.

ONE... I
KNOW HOW
TEMPTING
IT IS TO
BOAST
ABOUT
FUTURE
PLANS,
BUT YOU
REALLY
SHOULDN'T...
NOT TO
ME.



AND
TWO. IT
APPEARS
THE AGE
OF MY
BEING A
GENTLE-
MAN...



...HAS
JUST
PASSED.

I enjoyed
that.

DAMN
ME.



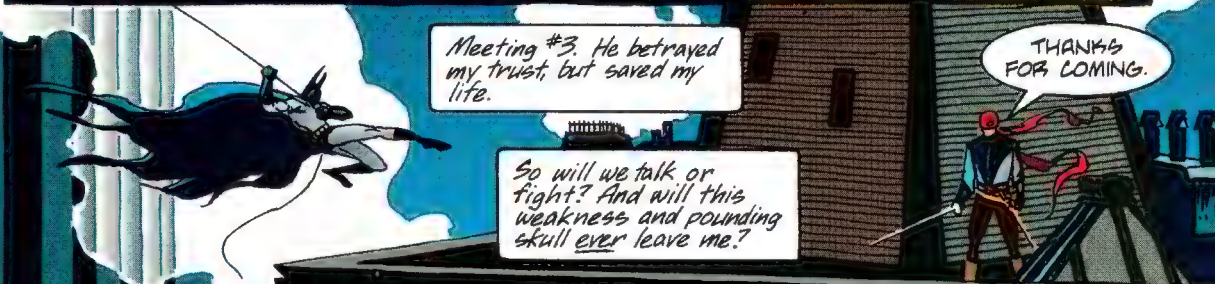


The sound of the cell door slamming on Lime feels good. Hell...it feels great.

Slowly the fire of my obsession is cooling.
-Reason returns.

Now there's nothing to keep me from rest and recovery...to keep me from my bed. Nothi--

IT'S THE CAVALIER. HE WANTS A MEETING.



Meeting #3. He betrayed my trust, but saved my life.

So will we talk or fight? And will this weakness and pounding skull ever leave me?

THANKS FOR COMING.



AS IF I HAD A CHOICE. YOU SAVED MY LIFE.

AS IF I HAD A CHOICE.

I OWE YOU. I... LOOK, YOU HAVEN'T MURDERED ANYONE, IT'S JUST THOSE THEFTS. RETURN WHAT YOU STOLE AND VANISH. I WON'T COME LOOKING FOR YOU.

THEY HAVEN'T BEEN REPORTED YET.



Vision going.

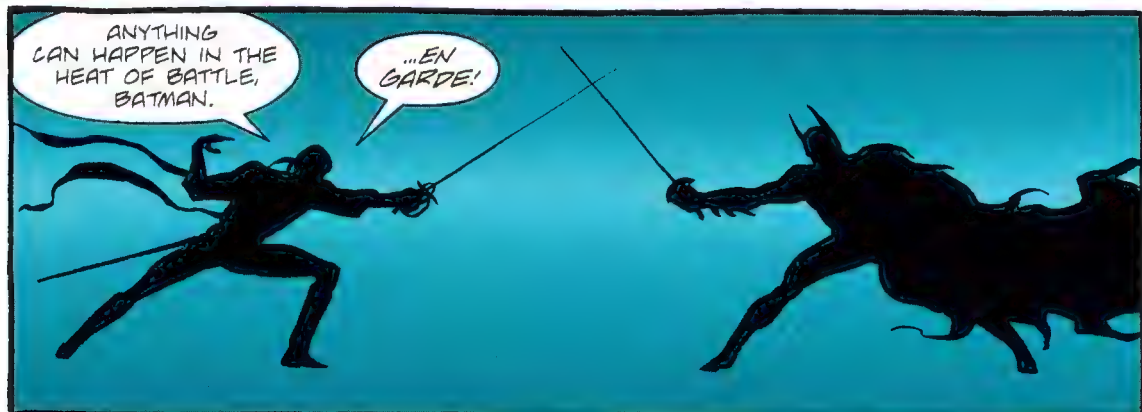
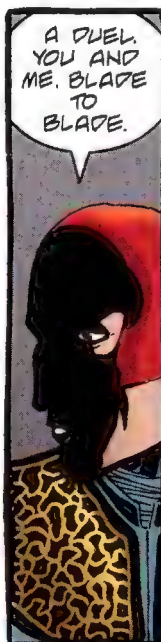
Brain's molten hot--can't think.

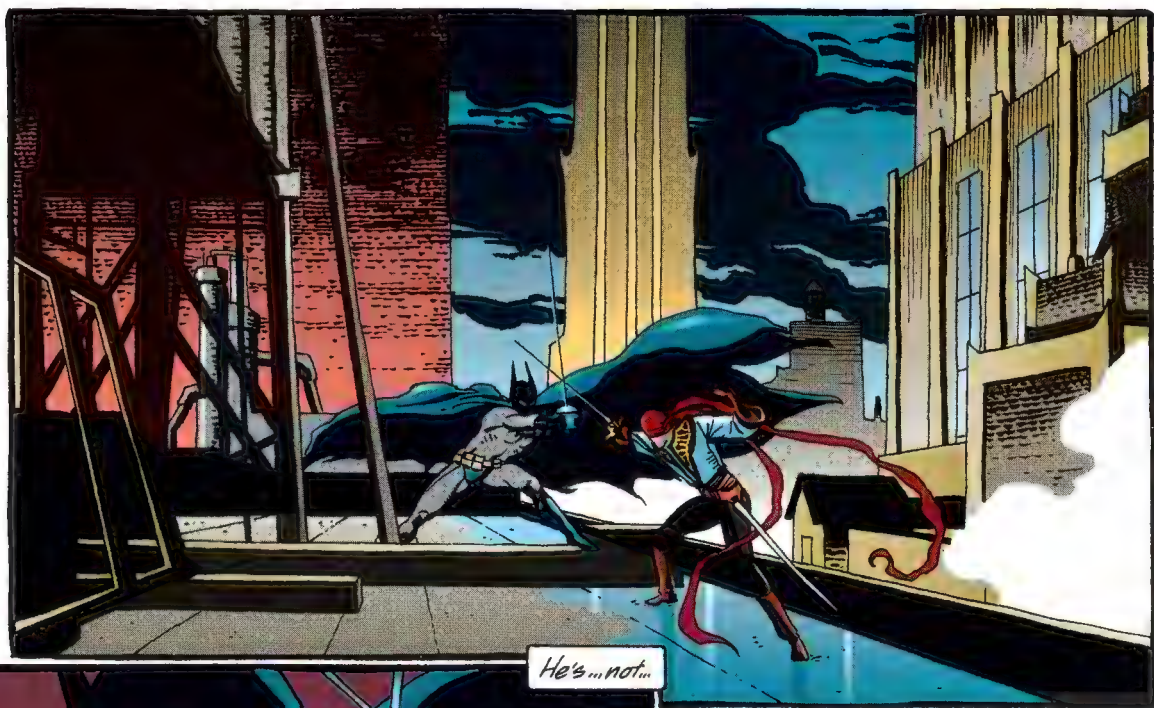


MY MURDERS. TWO OF THEM. YOU'LL GET THE WORD OF THEM SOON, AND THEN NO DEBT OF GRATITUDE WOULD STOP YOU FROM HUNTING ME DOWN, WOULD IT?



NO. BEST TO FACE FACTS...TAKE THE BULL BY THE HORNS.





He's...not...

...going to
beat me.

...not going
to beat me.

But I'm sick...

...I'm tired.

Can't let...

...that stop me.



Cut me... he's...

...better than
I thought.

...better...

Rathbone, or
Power... which
am I...

...hero or
villain?

Feint...great
feint...

...almost...

Great parry...
almost...

God, I'm...

...I... could...

...lose...

...could...

Can't find
my footing--
roof's wet...

...MOSS or
something.

God, this
roof's...

...old, too. Almost
slipped.

Too weak for this
as it is.

Can't afford
to f--





Ribs snapped.
Ankle... maybe
broken...
definitely
sprained.

Blacking
out.

Out.

THIS
SIDE
UP
↓



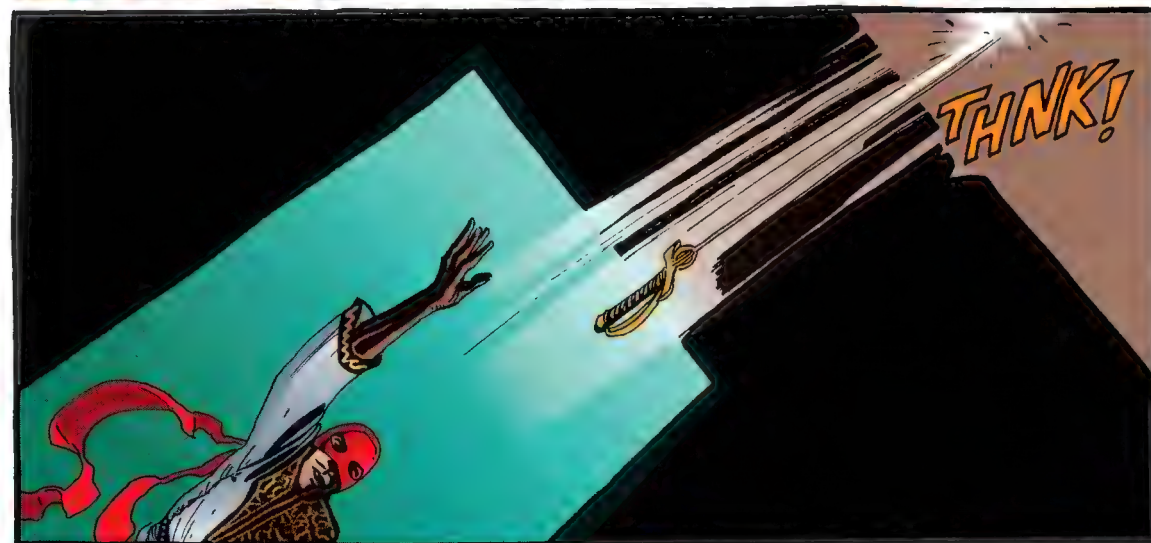
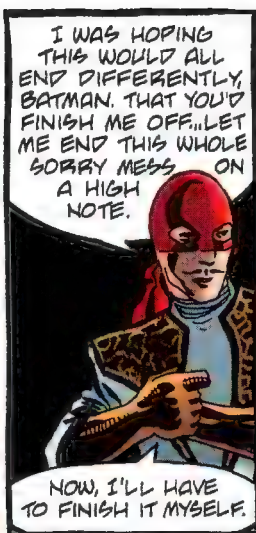
I'M
FINISHED.
YOU'VE
WON.



DO
WHAT YOU
WILL.



No!!







BLADE

Part Three

James Robinson

Tim Sale

Willie Schubert

Steve Oliff

Archie Goodwin

Paul Kavanagh

Remember,
Batman, the
potential for
evil is in
every man. In
every man.

...even
you.

...even
you.

...even
you.



TS
92

END

MERCURY WATCHES
OVER THEM...OR SO
THE ROMANS BELIEVED...



...WATCHES
OVER
THIEVES.

SO
EASY...

FOR HE IS THEIR GOD,
WHO PROTECTS...

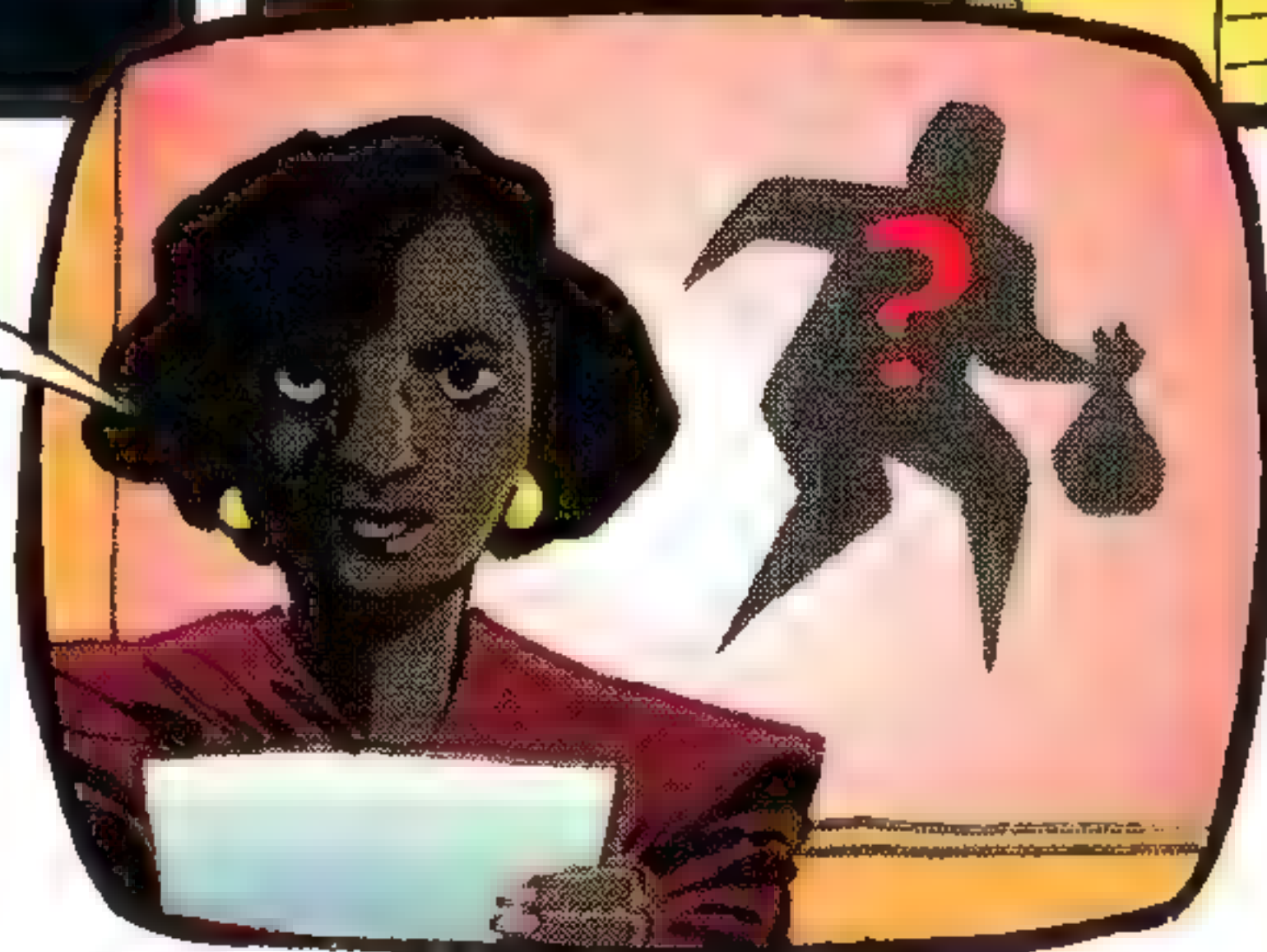
...AND BIDS THEM
PROSPER.

...IT'S
CRIMINAL.



SECOND WEEK
OF DARING JEWEL
THEFTS. GOTHAM'S
WEALTHY LIVE
IN FEAR.

REPORT
AT
ELEVEN.





He's struck again.

Mr. Lime has struck again.
- And again.
- And again.
- And again.

Four times a long-range rifle, a different part of town, and an old person dead.
- So much for variety of M.O.

Well, now I'm mad.

Lime must have slipped. There must be clues... why can't I see them? Why can't I catch him?

Why am I such a damn fool?!

Maybe he's mad after his fire at the retirement home... the fact that no one died.

SCENE OF THE CRIME: MARIA VALDEZ

SINCE YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO HEAR YOURSELF MUMBLING OBSESSIVELY WHILE I HOOVER UP THIS MESS--

SIR, THE BAT-SIGNAL'S IN THE SKY.

--WHY NOT SEE WHAT CAPTAIN GORDON WANTS?

SCENE OF THE CRIME: THOMAS LUKE

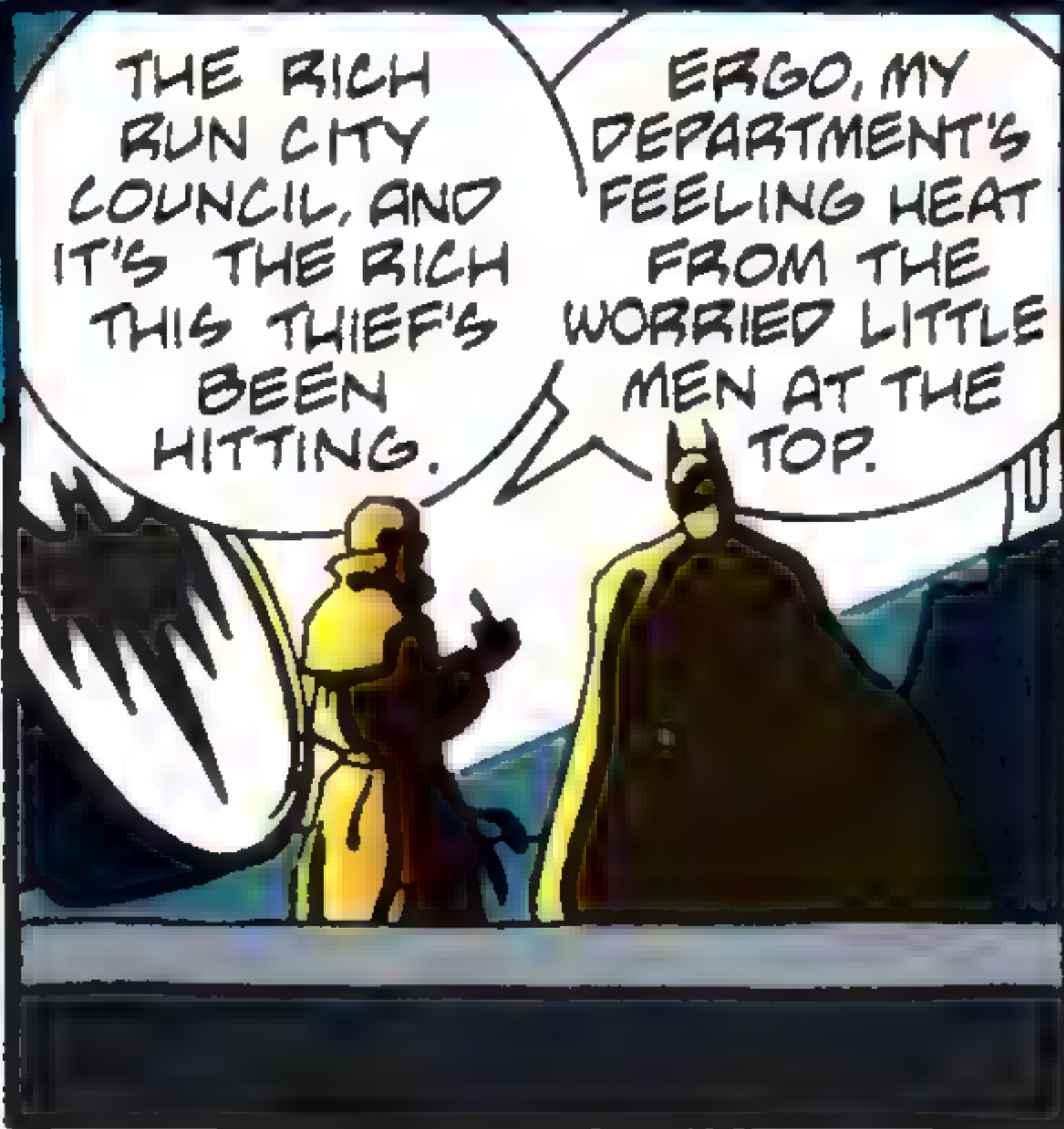


YOU CAME.

YES.



I NEED YOUR HELP. THESE ROBBERIES... TEN IN TWO WEEKS.



THE RICH RUN CITY COUNCIL, AND IT'S THE RICH THIS THIEF'S BEEN HITTING.
ERGO, MY DEPARTMENT'S FEELING HEAT FROM THE WORRIED LITTLE MEN AT THE TOP.



NOT THAT I CARE ABOUT THAT, BUT THIS GUY DOES NEED TO BE CAUGHT.

I'M BUSY.



OH. LIME?

OF COURSE. NO TIME FOR DISTRACTIONS.

YOU WANT HELP, ASK THE CAVALIER.



THE CAVALIER...? IS HE UP TO IT?

MAYBE. AT LEAST HE'S THE KIND OF HERO--

--I MIGHT HAVE BECOME--

"--IF THINGS
HAD BEEN
DIFFERENT."

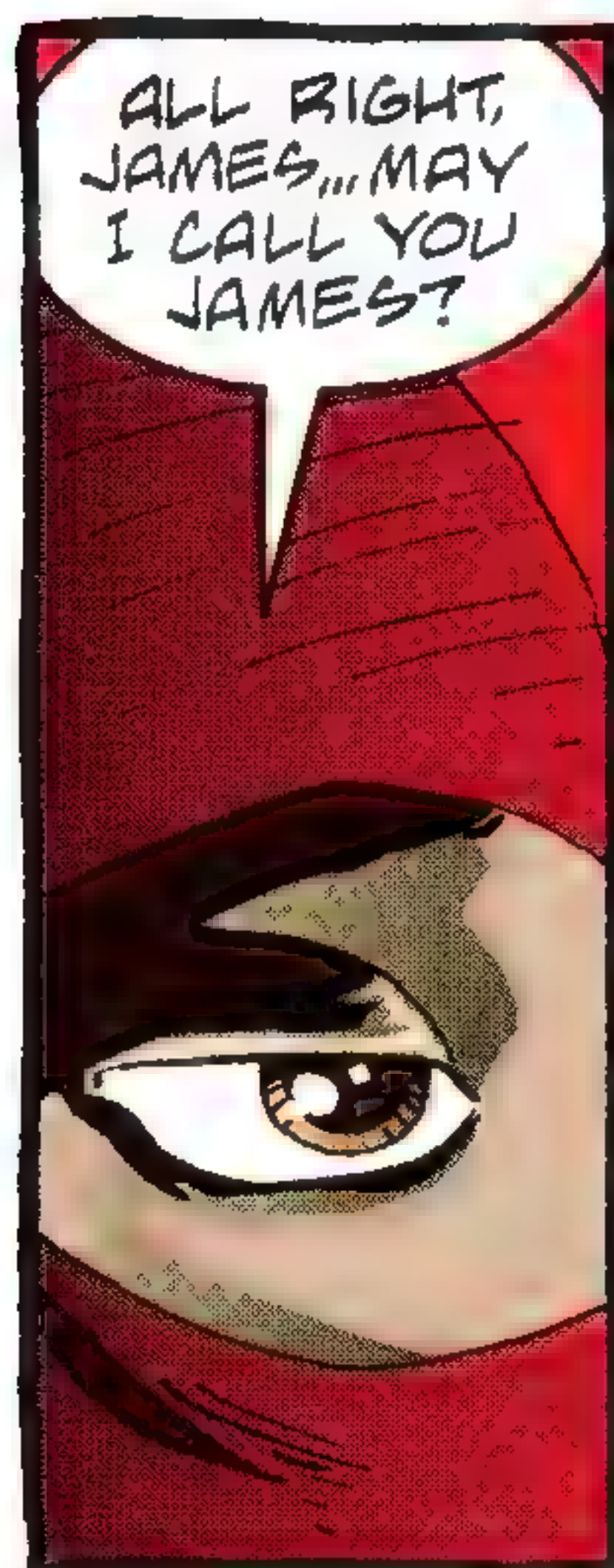
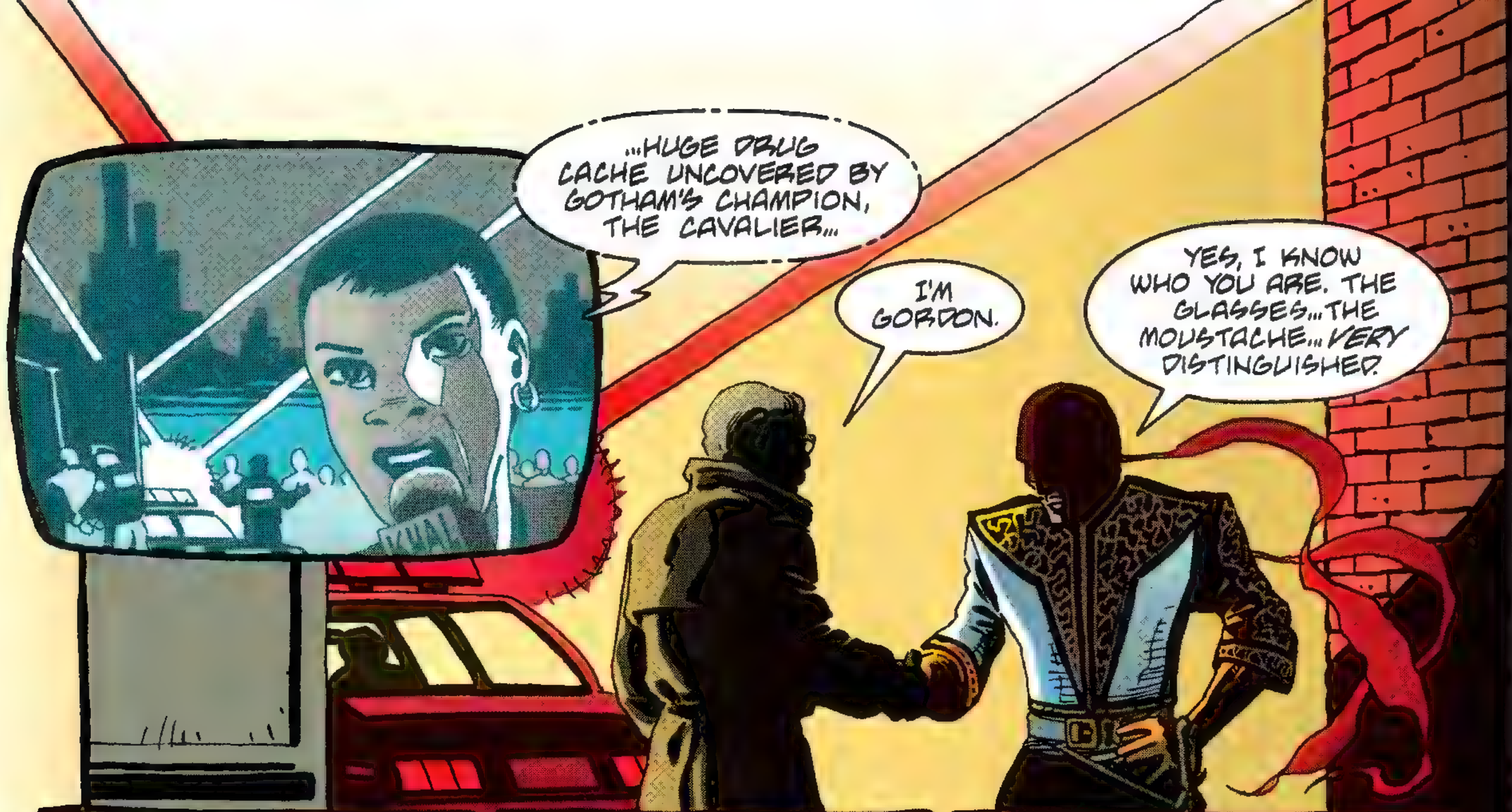
NO
DRUGS.
NOT IN MY
CITY.

GET THE
POINT?

BLADES

Part Two

—BY—
James Robinson · STORY Tim Sale · ART
WILLIE SCHUBERT · LETTERS STEVE OLIFF · COLORS
ARCHIE GOODWIN & BILL KAPLAN · EDITORS



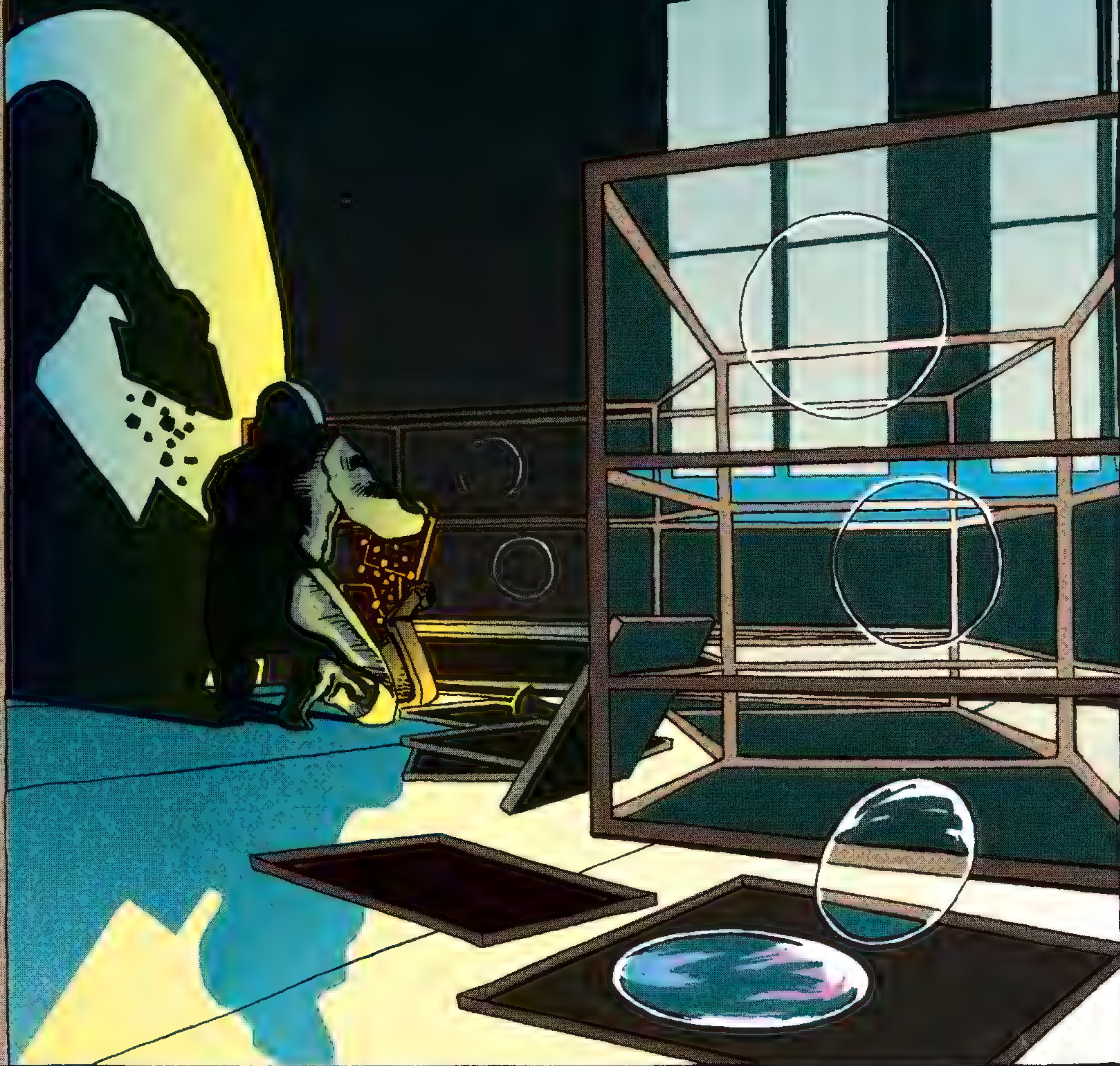
BECAUSE OF THE
RECENT THEFTS...

5TH AVE JEWELERS

THIS FIRM HAD UPPED
ITS SECURITY, AT A
COST OF MANY
THOUSANDS.

IT HAD TAKEN HIM
SEVEN MINUTES
INSTEAD OF FOUR TO
GET INTO THE PLACE.

MERCURY... AND THE
THIEF CONTINUE TO
SMILE.



THE NIGHT...

YOU KNOW SOMETHING.

ONE OF YOU MUST KNOW SOMETHING.

ABOUT LIME!

WHY WON'T YOU TALK?

ANSWERS, DAMN IT!

Give me answers!

This won't... Lime won't...

...won't break me. Won't

THE NIGHT... IS DARKNESS.

A SHADOW VOID WHERE HIDDEN TERRORS LURK.

THE NIGHT... IS GAUDY NEON... FLICKERING TUNGSTEN.

SEEMING TWICE AS GARISH, BRIGHT FOR THE DARKNESS IT MUST COUNTER.

THE DARKNESS CHILLS.

THE NIGHT-LIGHT DAZZLES.

BOTH WORK FOR THOSE WHO KNOW HOW TO WIELD THEM.

AT NIGHT...

"THERE IS THE LIGHT THAT GLOWS FROM WITHIN THE DARKNESS.

AND THERE IS THE DARKNESS ITSELF.

No. It...it's... the feel of life... of being alive... that this brings me. Better than any drug.

I have what I want. I see that now. Not the fame, not the money.



FOR SOME MEN
EVIL IS NOT A
VIOLENT RAGE, NOR
VICIOUS URGE, NOR
COMPULSION, NOR
NECESSITY OF
SURVIVAL.



FOR SOME MEN EVIL
IS MERELY A STATE
OF BEING...AN EVER-
LINGERING MALAISE.

EVIL IS A GIFT OF
BIRTH...AN INNATE
TALENT. INSTEAD OF
A SILVER SPOON
SUCH MEN ARE
BORN WITH DAGGER
IN HAND...WHICH
THEY'RE ALL TOO
WILLING TO BURY IN
YOUR BACK.

SUCH A
MAN IS
RANDOLPH
SALT.

AND TO DEAL
WITH HIM IS
TO DEAL WITH
THE DEVIL.



WHAT IS
IT, ROGET? THE
WINDOW?

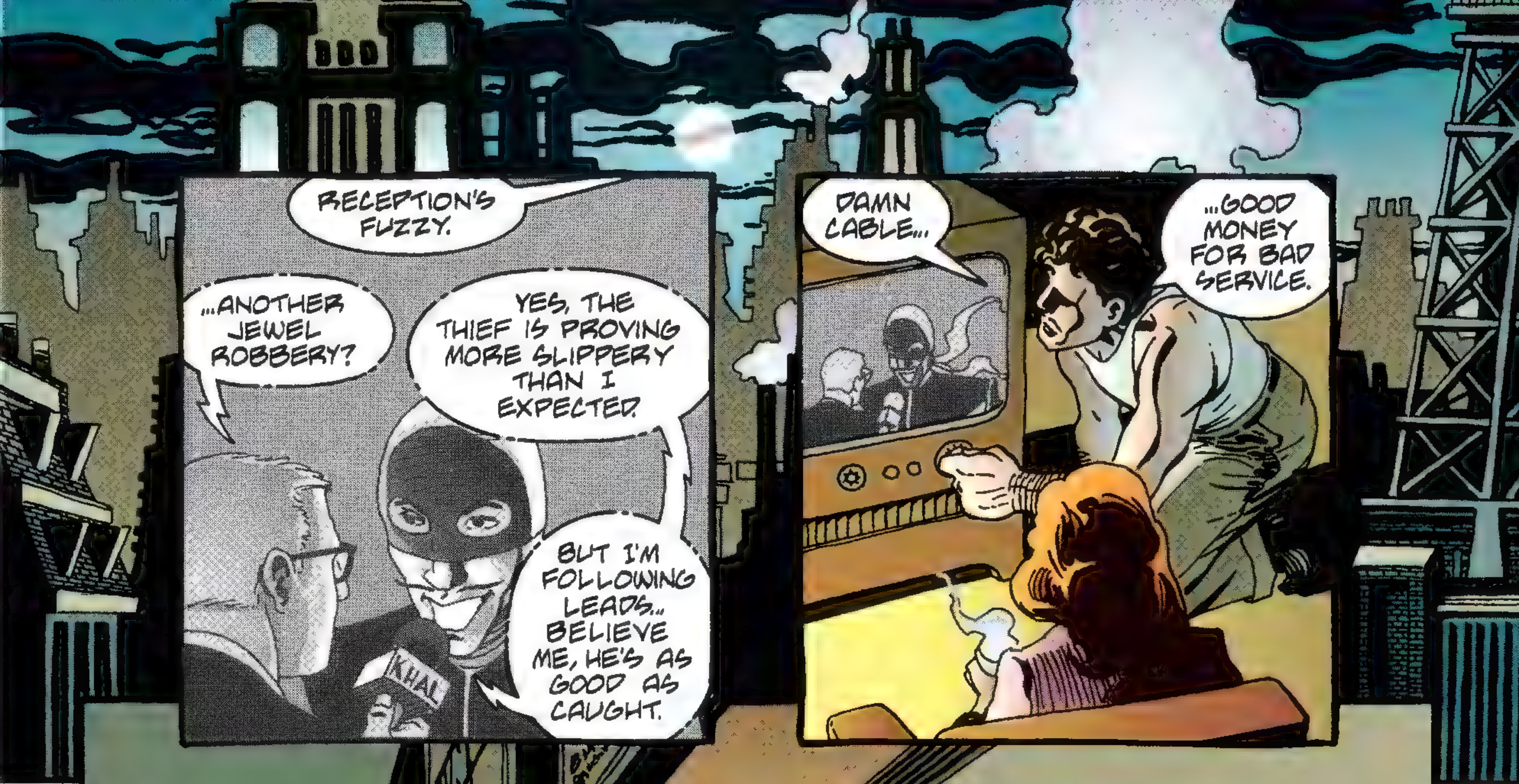


OH, IT'S YOU.

YES, IT'S ME.



--WE HAVE A DEAL.



RECEPTION'S FUZZY.

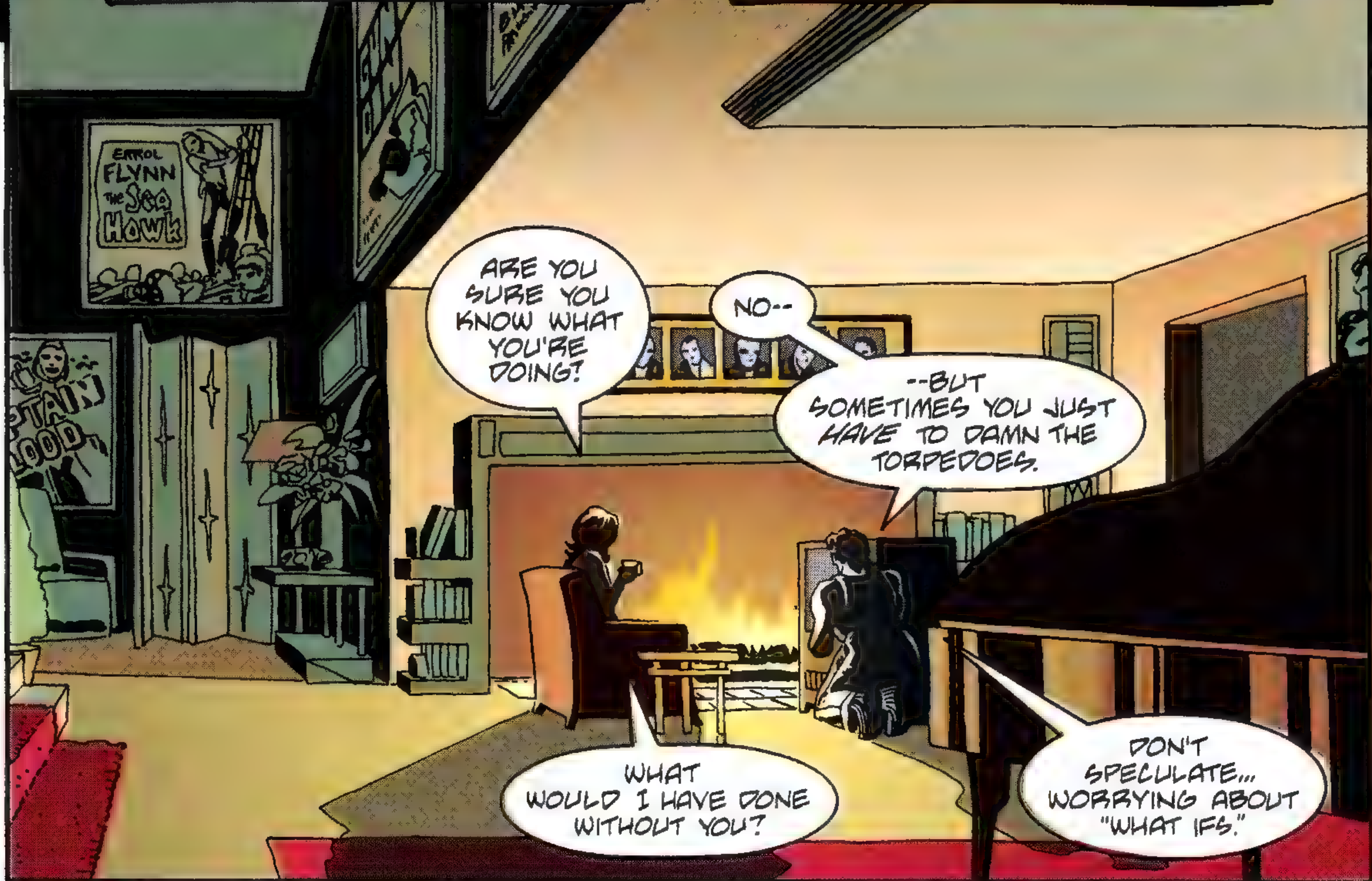
...ANOTHER JEWEL ROBBERY?

YES, THE THIEF IS PROVING MORE SLIPPERY THAN I EXPECTED.

BUT I'M FOLLOWING LEADS... BELIEVE ME, HE'S AS GOOD AS CAUGHT.

DAMN CABLE...

...GOOD MONEY FOR BAD SERVICE.



ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING?

NO--

--BUT SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO DAMN THE TORPEDOES.

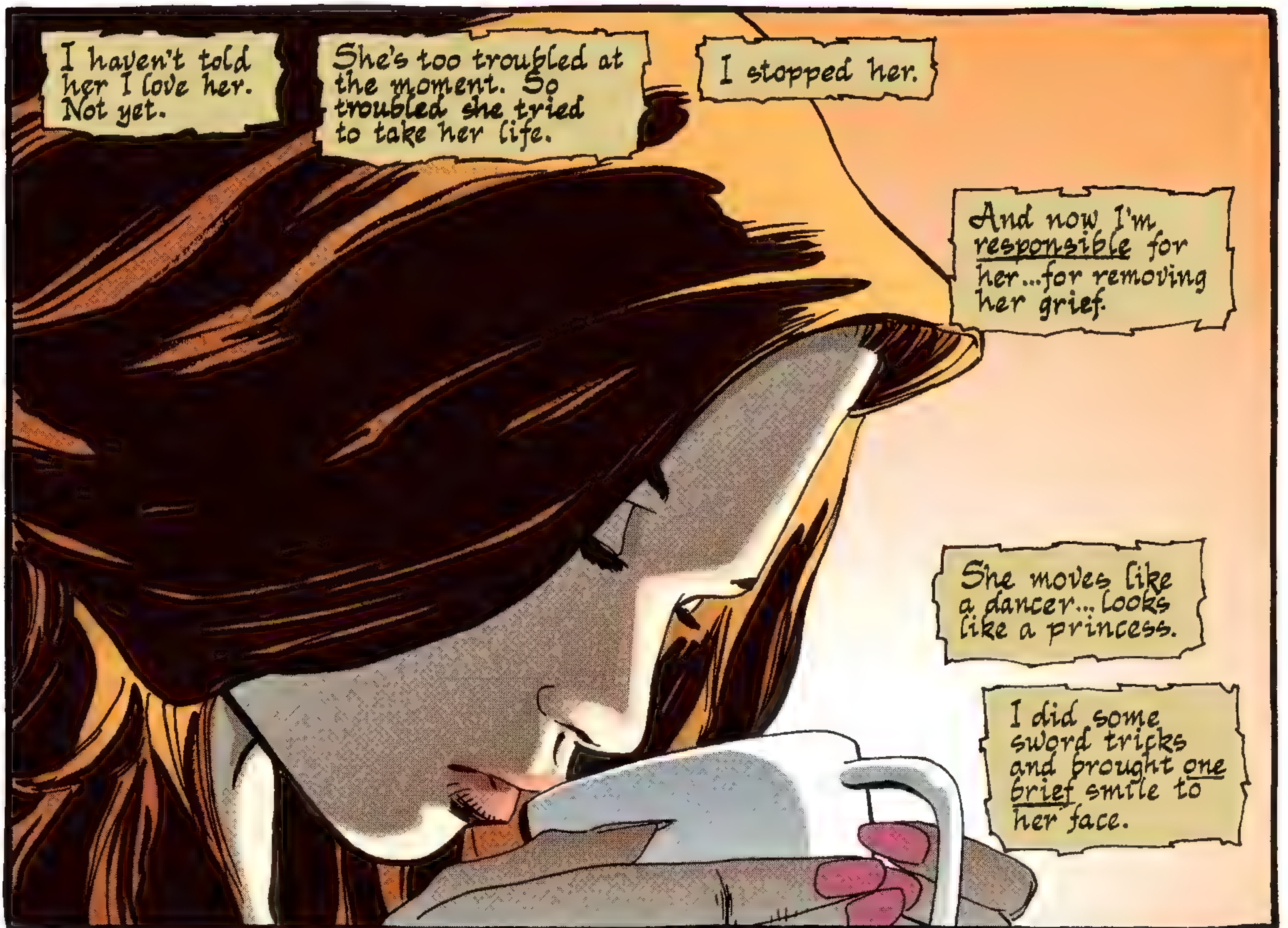
WHAT WOULD I HAVE DONE WITHOUT YOU?

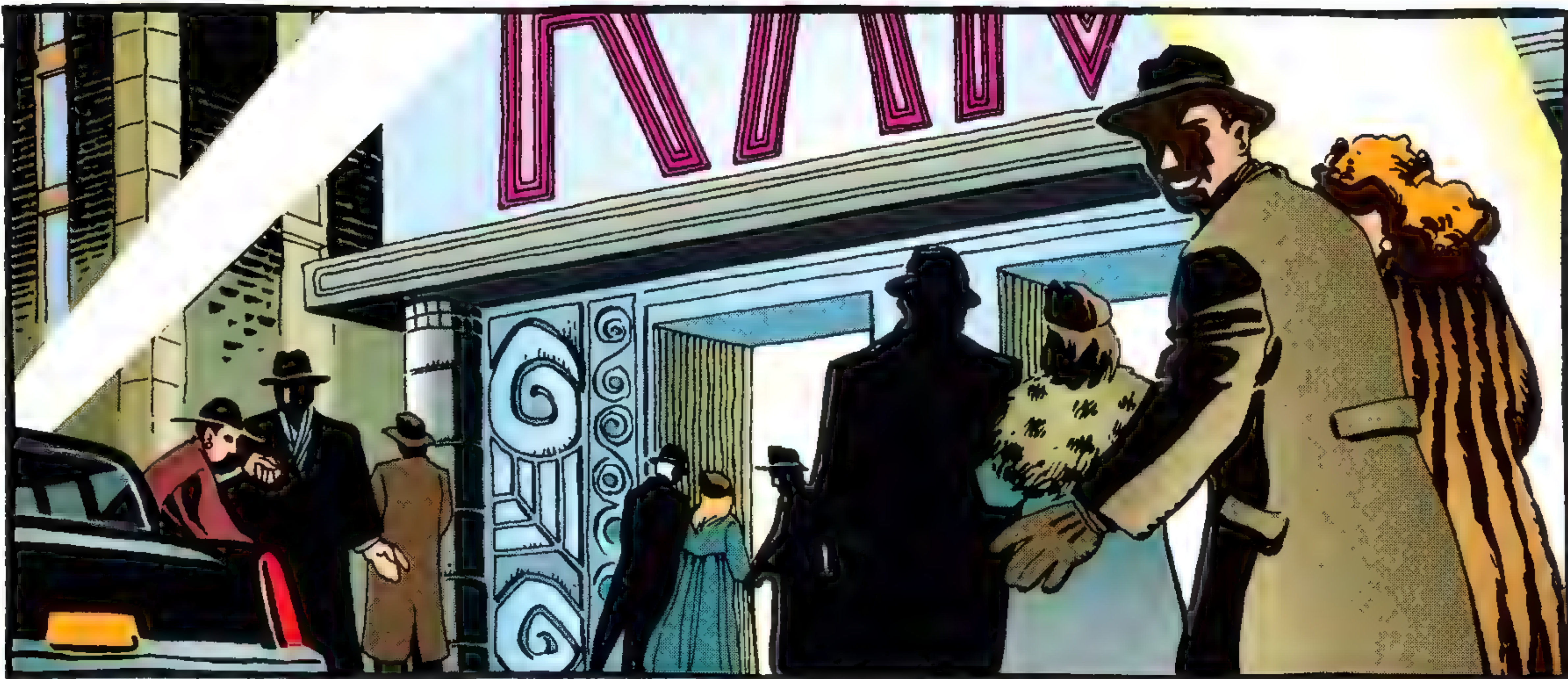
DON'T SPECULATE... WORRYING ABOUT "WHAT IF'S."



YOU HAVE ME AS YOUR PROTECTOR... YOUR CHAMPION.

Her name is Ellen.





LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...WE'RE GATHERED HERE TONIGHT TO SALUTE ONE OF OUR COUNTRY'S GREATEST ACTORS, MELVIN AMECHE.

HIS SIXTY YEARS OF TRIUMPHS ON BOTH STAGE AND SCREEN ARE MORE THAN A LIFE'S WORK...IT'S A LEGACY.

Ameche's famous, he's in the public eye--

--and he's old.

"A GREAT ACTOR."

"A GREAT MAN."

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I GIVE YOU...MELVIN AMECHE.

Mr. Lime will strike here tonight. I know he will.



And I am
ready.



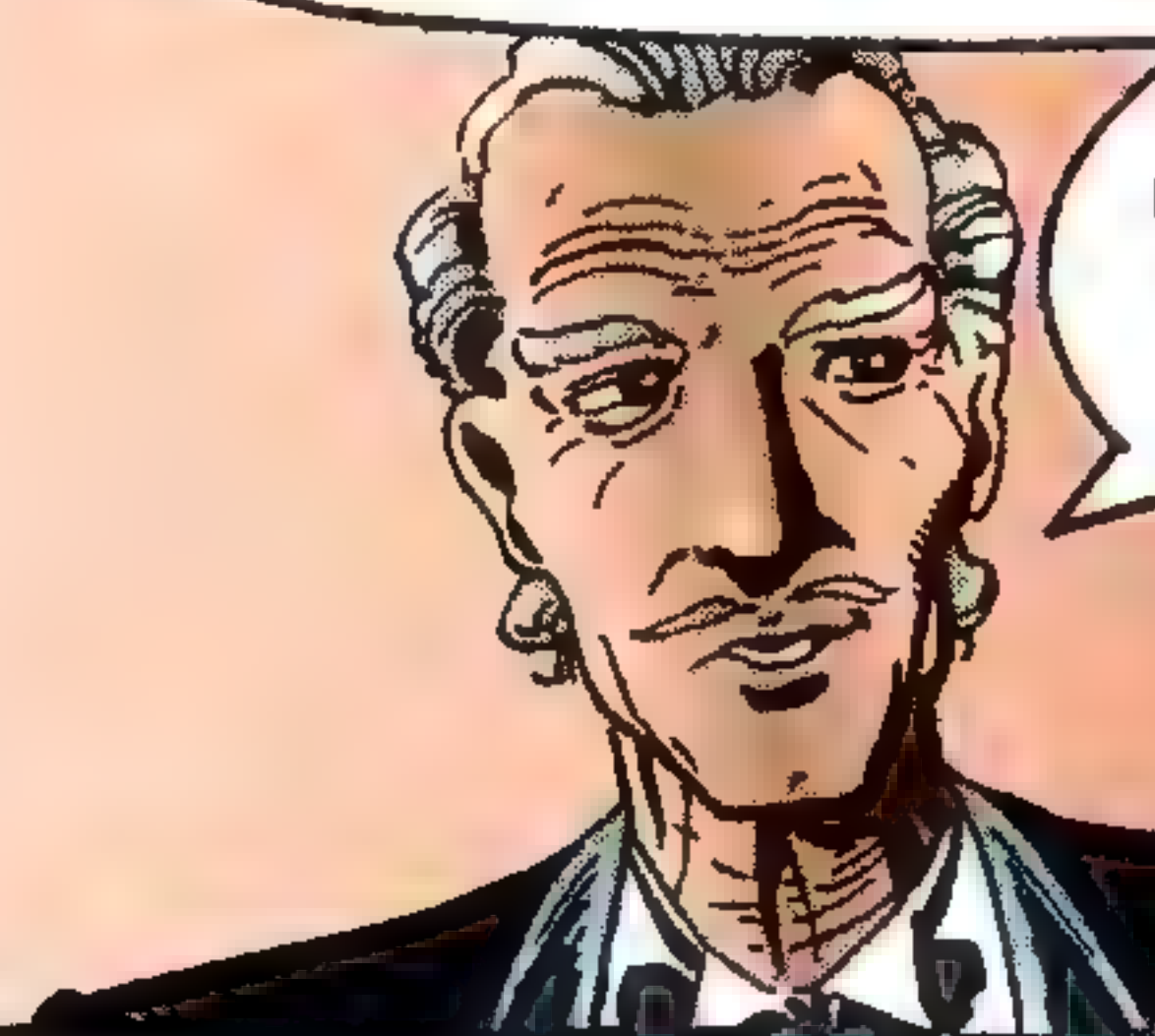
"LOOKING BACK...
TO BE HONEST, DURING
THOSE EARLY LEAN TIMES, I
DIDN'T THINK I'D LAST IN
THE BUSINESS MORE
THAN FIVE YEARS..."

Infrared
eyepiece, so
nothing can
hide from me...
in the light of
the auditorium
or the dark
of backstage.

One eye
for each.



"GOLDWYN WAS A
MAN WHO KNEW WHAT HE
WANTED. I WAS AN ACTOR WHO
KNEW WHAT I WANTED.



PROBLEM
WAS WE DIDN'T
ALWAYS WANT
THE SAME
THING..."

Ultra-directional
audio unit. The
microphone can
pinpoint any
sound to the
square inch.

Come on, Lime.
You've got a
target. You've
got the crowd.
Make your
move.



What
was--

"YES, IT
DISAPPOINTS ME THAT
HOLLYWOOD APPEARS TO HAVE
SACRIFICED QUALITY FOR THE
MONETARY REWARDS OF THE
SEQUEL...BUT I TAKE HEART IN
THE FEW FINE FILMS I
SEE BEING MADE..."



No.
Nothing.

...SO THANK
YOU ALL. THOSE
OF YOU WHO HONORED ME
BY SEEING AT LEAST ONE
OF MY PERFORMANCES
IN TIMES PAST...

There! I
thought for
an instant.

Yes, I'm
right.

Angle audio
detector.
Below me.
Directly
below.

I'm a fool.

Lime's
addled my
thinking.
I'm not
planning
for every
variant.

...AND TO
THOSE OF YOU WHO
HONORED ME BY TURNING
UP TONIGHT TO WATCH
AN OLD HAM GET
EMOTIONAL.

I ONLY
HOPE MY NEXT 60
YEARS ARE AS
SUCCESS--

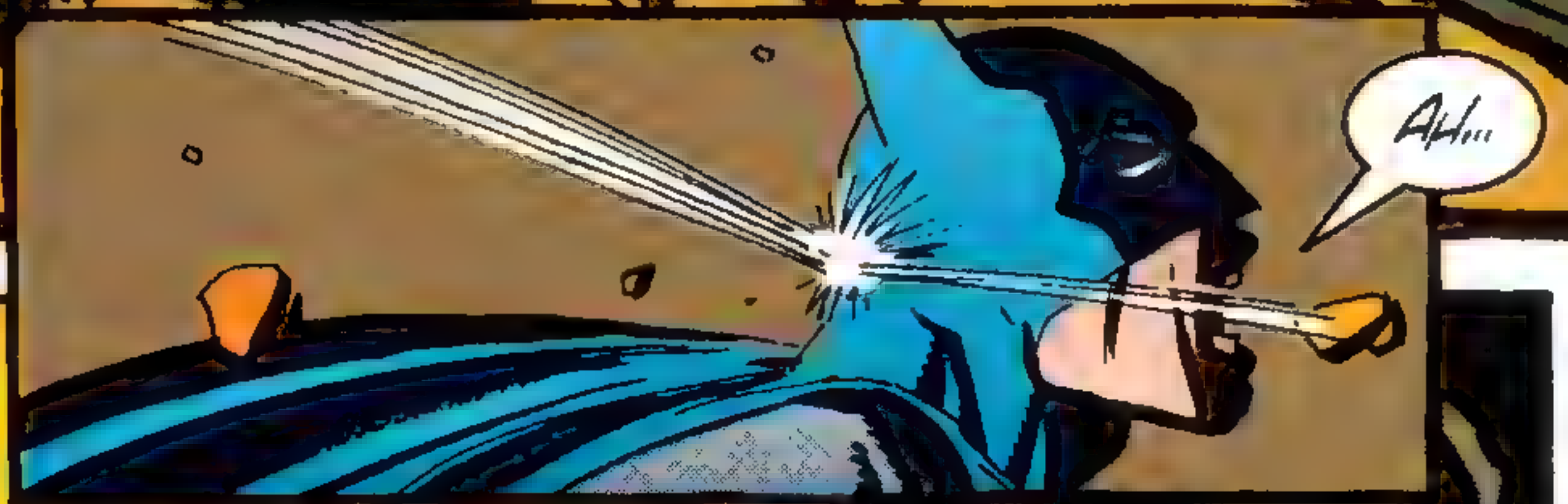
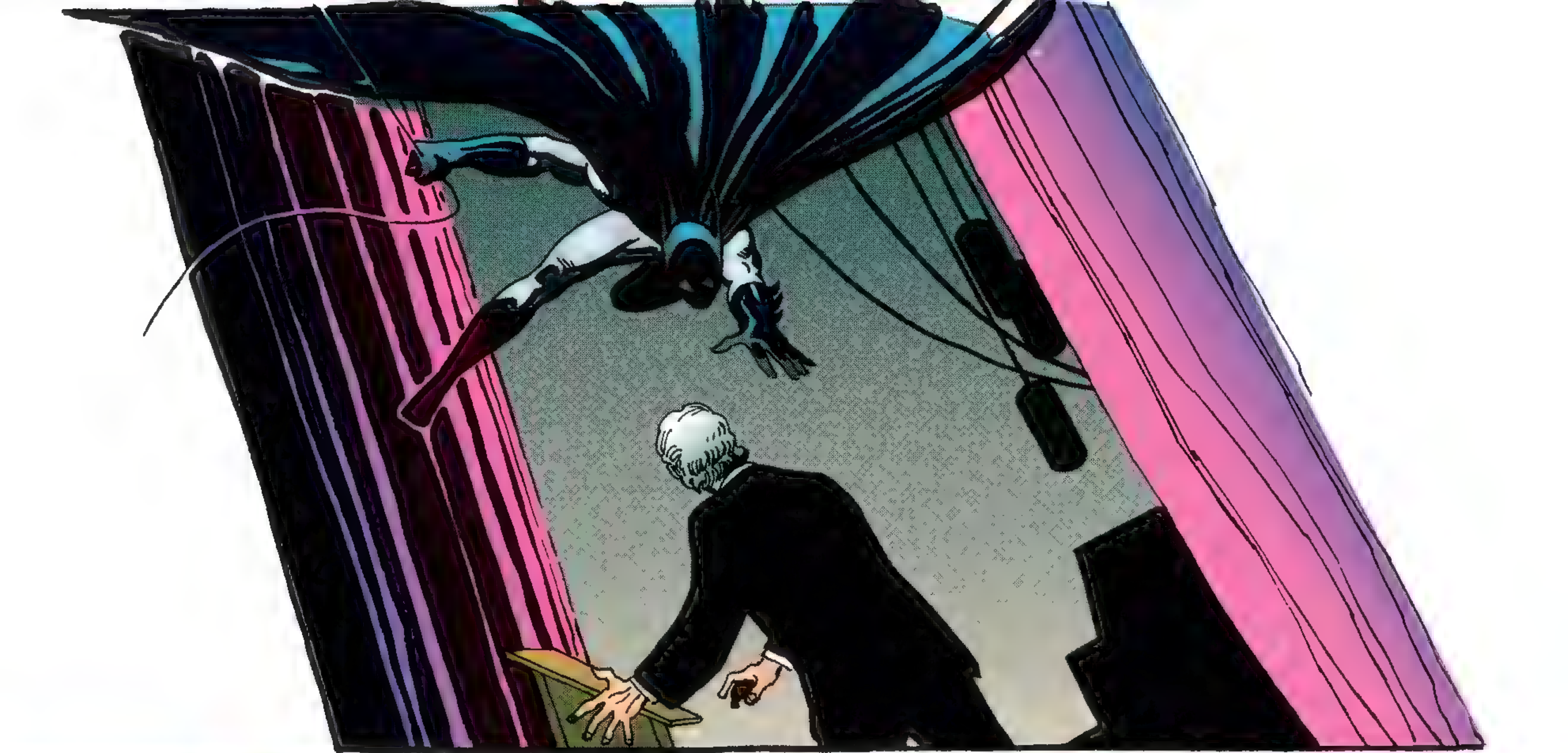
Too busy
looking
around
Ameche... for
an attacker
to show his
hand.

But Lime
got in early.

Podium. Tick-
ings coming
from the
podium.

My mistake.
Fast... have to
move... or
Ameche pays
for it.

He knew Tyrone Power.
He can't die.



My head--pain--
flare-hot--

Focus--can't--
double-vision--

Ameche's
breathing.

But--I--I'm--
Why can't--
I stop
shivering?

MUSEUMS TAKE PLANNING.

EVEN THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED OF THIEVES WILL ADMIT...

MUSEUMS TAKE PLANNING.

THIS THIEF IS SOUNDLESS.

YET HE CURSES HIMSELF FOR THE NOISE HE MAKES.

THE THUMPING OF HIS PULSE, THE BEATING OF HIS HEART, THE POUNDING IN HIS HEAD... HIS BODY'S A GENE KRUPA SOLO.

LIGHT-BEAM ALARMS.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE.



BOK

NOT TO MENTION THE TRUSTY WATCHMEN.



YES, MUSEUMS
ARE HARD.

BUT NOT
IMPOSSIBLE. AS
LONG AS YOU
KNOW WHAT TO
EXPECT...

...LIKE THE FLOORS
BEING FRESHLY
WAXED.

SHI--

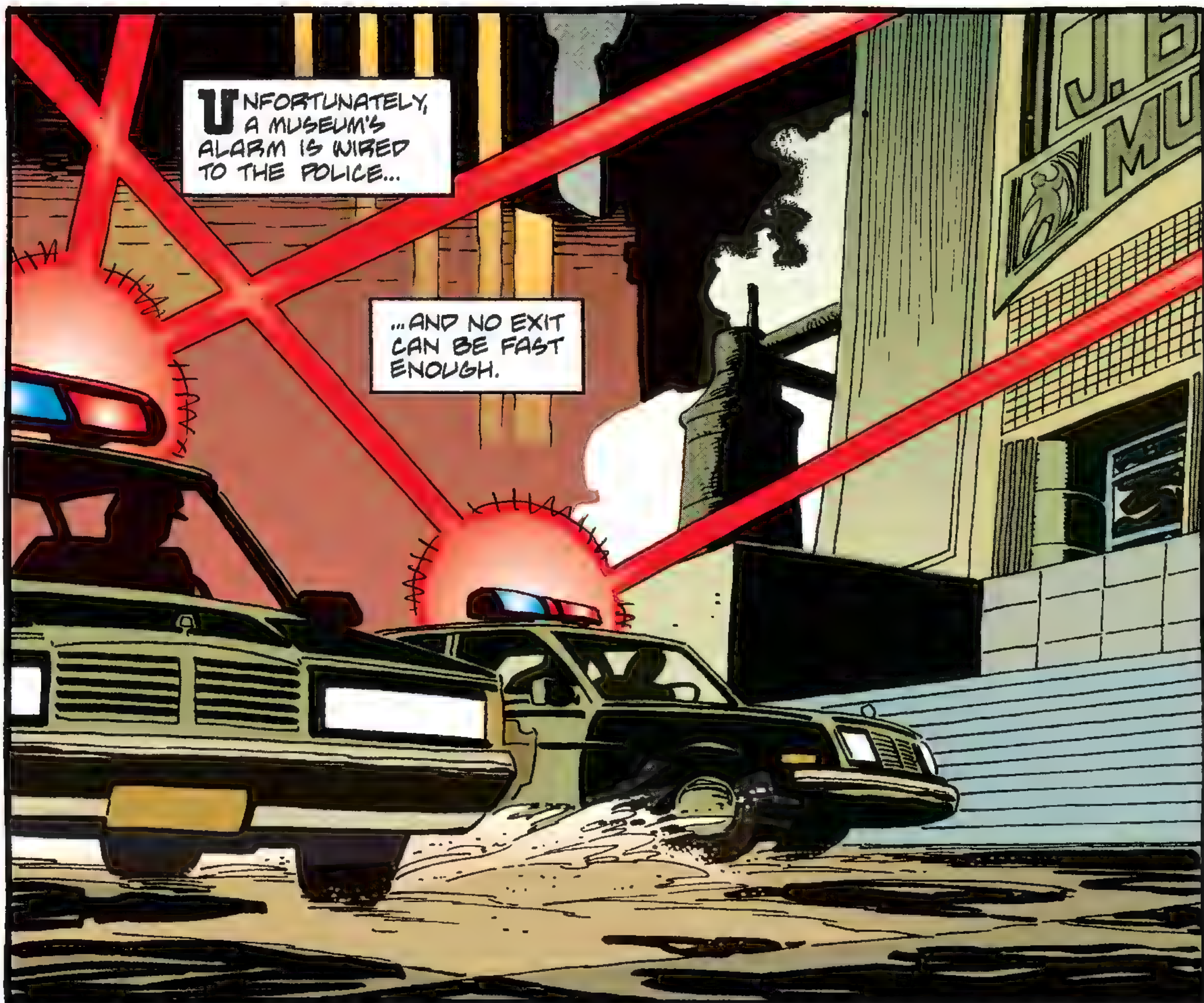
FOR THE
THIEF THE
ALARMS ARE
A RELIEF... A
RELEASE.

HE CAN
MOVE
QUICKLY
INSTEAD OF
CAREFULLY.

AND GLASS
NEED NOT
BE CUT WITH
WHISPER
SILENCE.

DAMN
!--

"THAT'S IT," HE THINKS,
"A SPEEDY SMASH,
GRAB, AND EXIT."



UNFORTUNATELY,
A MUSEUM'S
ALARM IS WIRED
TO THE POLICE...

...AND NO EXIT
CAN BE FAST
ENOUGH.



WHERE IS
HE?

I
THINK I
SEE--

UP
THERE!

LOOK!

GET
SOME
LIGHT ON THE
ROOF! CAN'T
SEE.



THERE!
A MAN!

HEY--!

IT'S--



I knew this would happen...that I'd be uncovered.

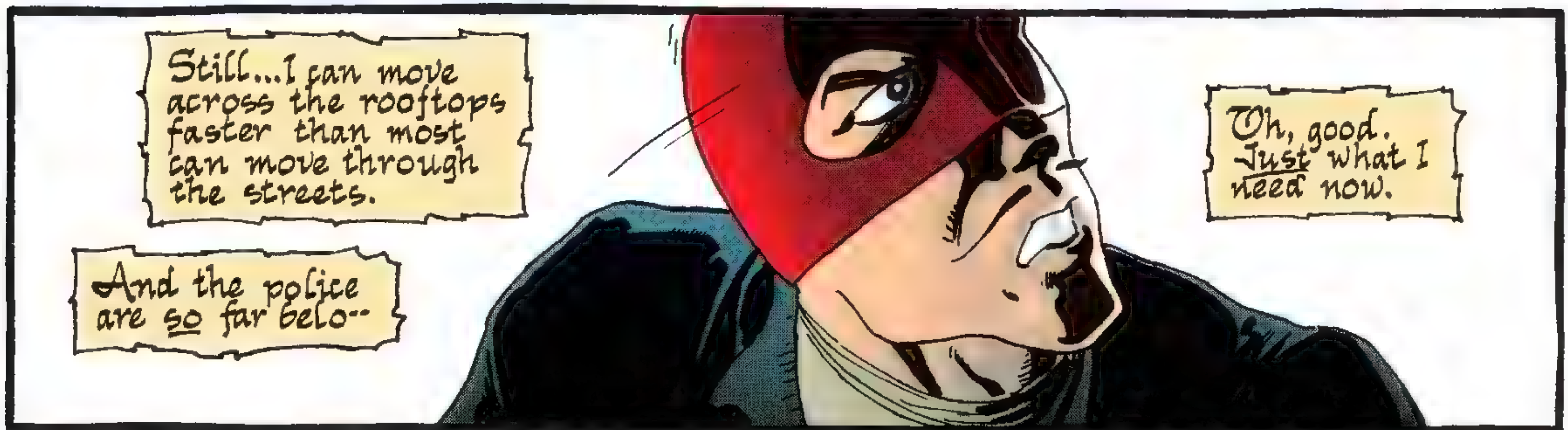
How could I think it wouldn't?

I don't...can't care. Had to do what Randolph Salt wanted.

Still...I can move across the rooftops faster than most can move through the streets.

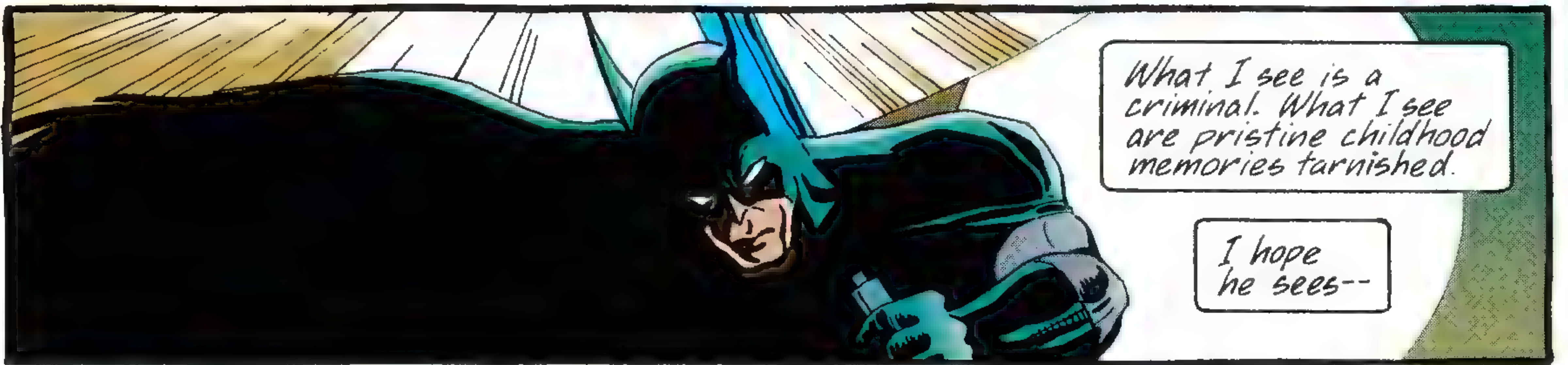
And the police are so far below--

Oh, good. Just what I need now.





Meeting #2. This time there is no banter. No smile. No laughing eyes.



What I see is a criminal. What I see are pristine childhood memories tarnished.

I hope he sees--



--his worst nightmare.



If only...

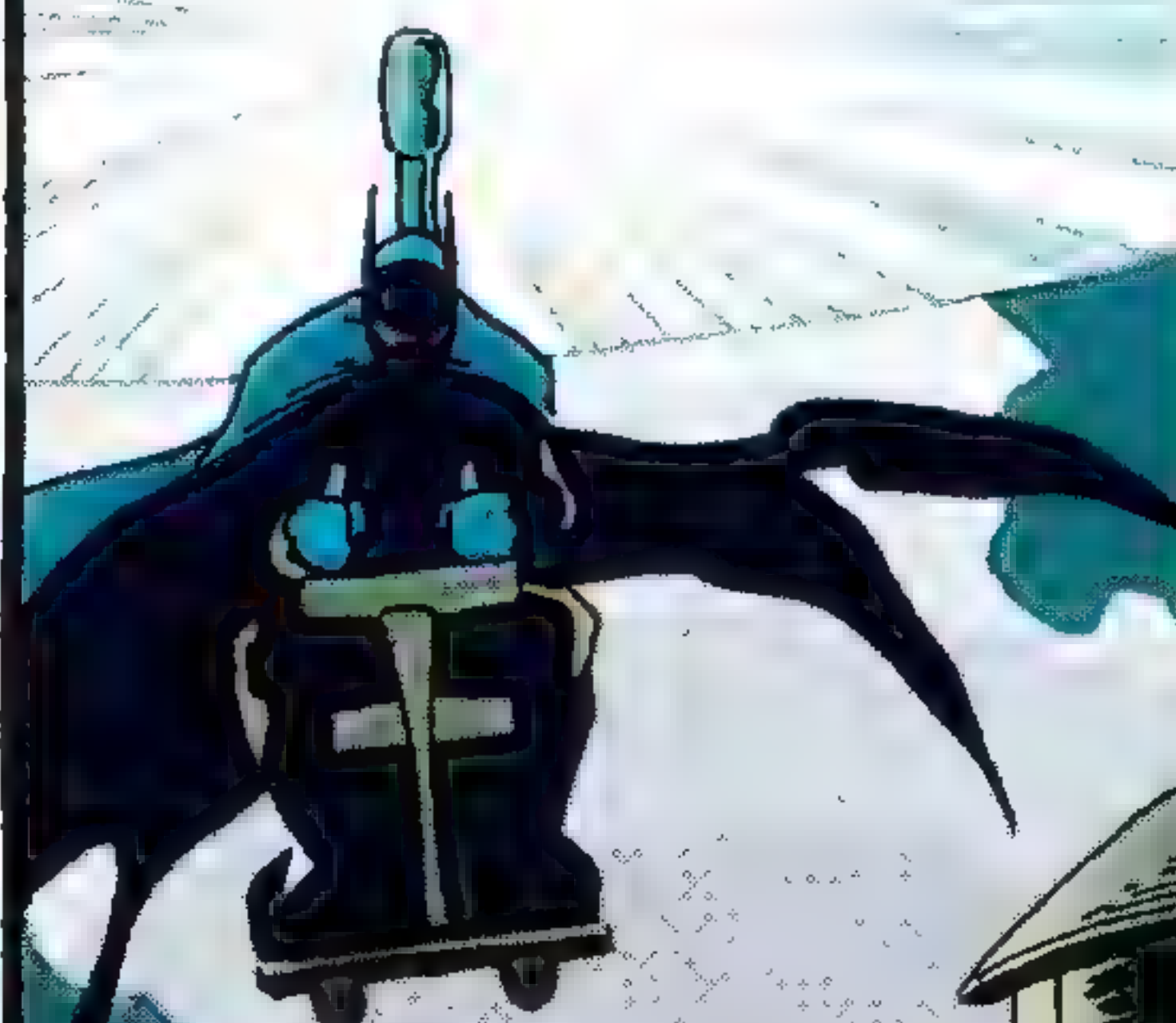
My skull wasn't
a furnace...my
movements
weren't sluggish...

If only I
could stop
shivering.

If only.



I don't
believe
it.



I'm enjoying
this, too.

I was ashamed at
first...that committing
crimes was as exciting
as stopping them.

Vision...slipping in and out of
focus. Shouldn't be here...
need time to recover...

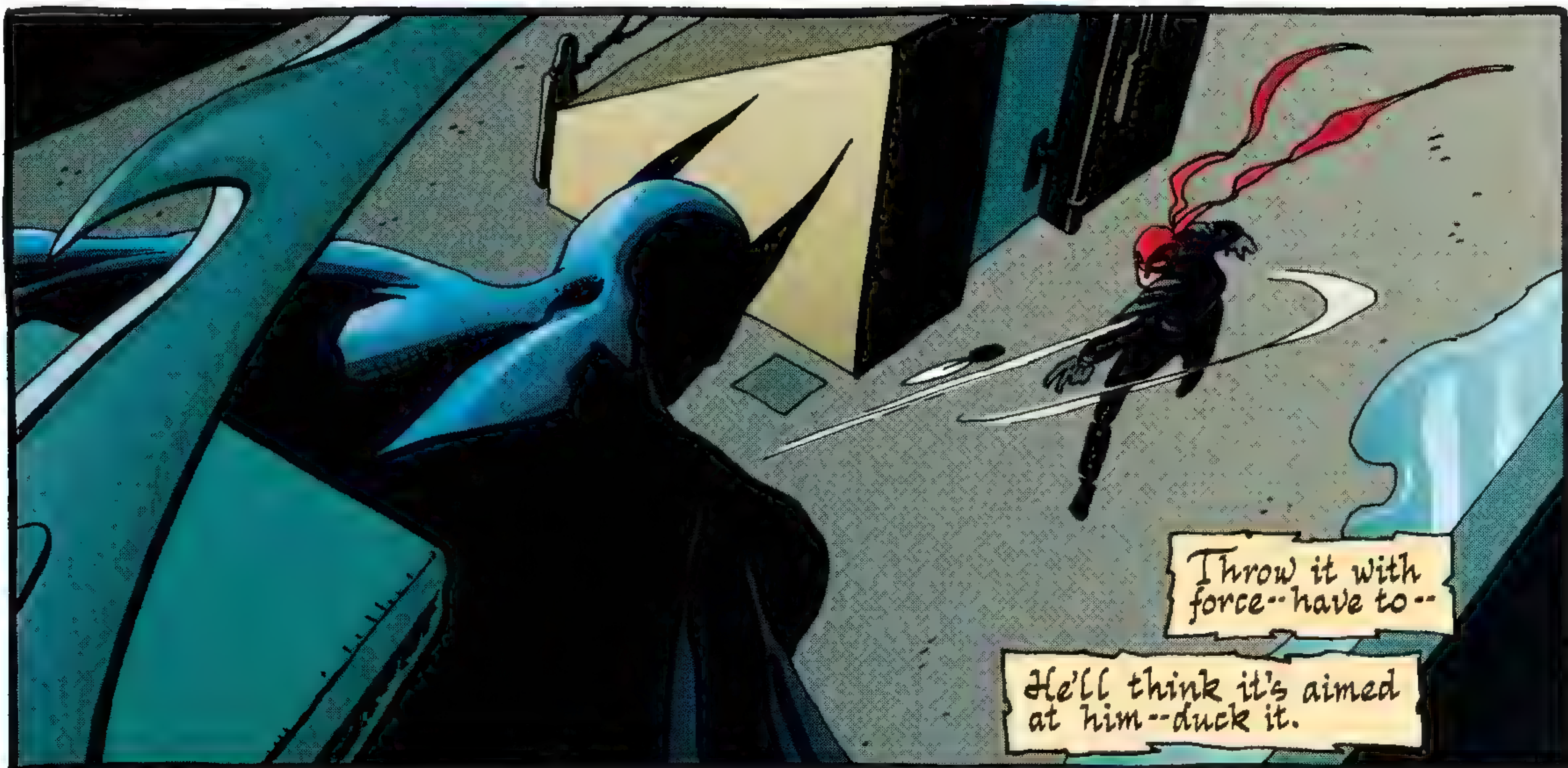
But I
had to...
to stop
the man
who
fooled
my city.
Fooled
me.

Why can't
I stop
shivering?



Yet now...capture...
I'm about to be
caught...

And I'm enjoying the
rush too much to care.



Throw it with force--have to--

He'll think it's aimed at him--duck it.

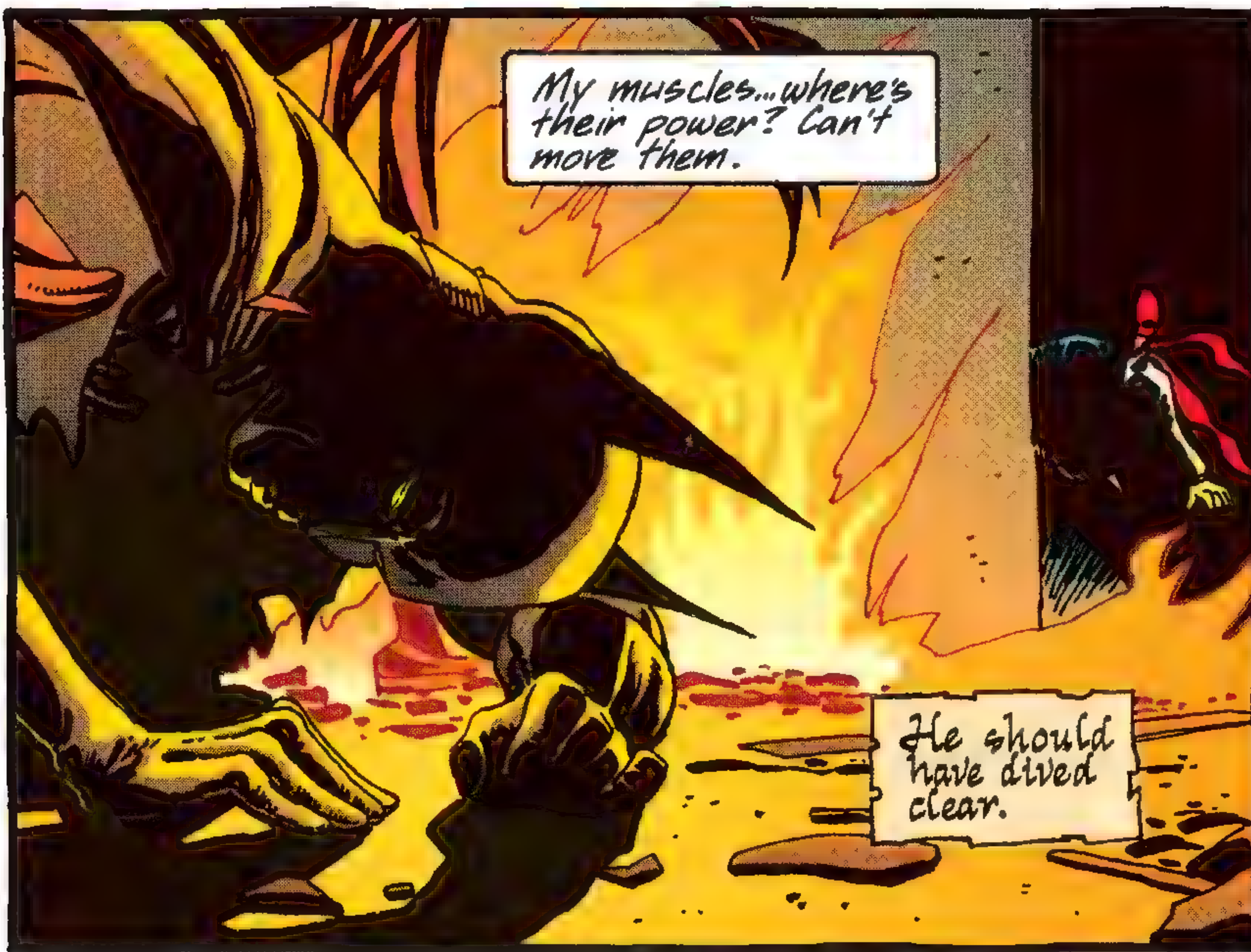


I'm moving at half speed-- it almost hit me.

But I'm a fencer foremost--and always think like one. The knife's a feint--

--that finds its intended target.





My muscles...where's their power? Can't move them.

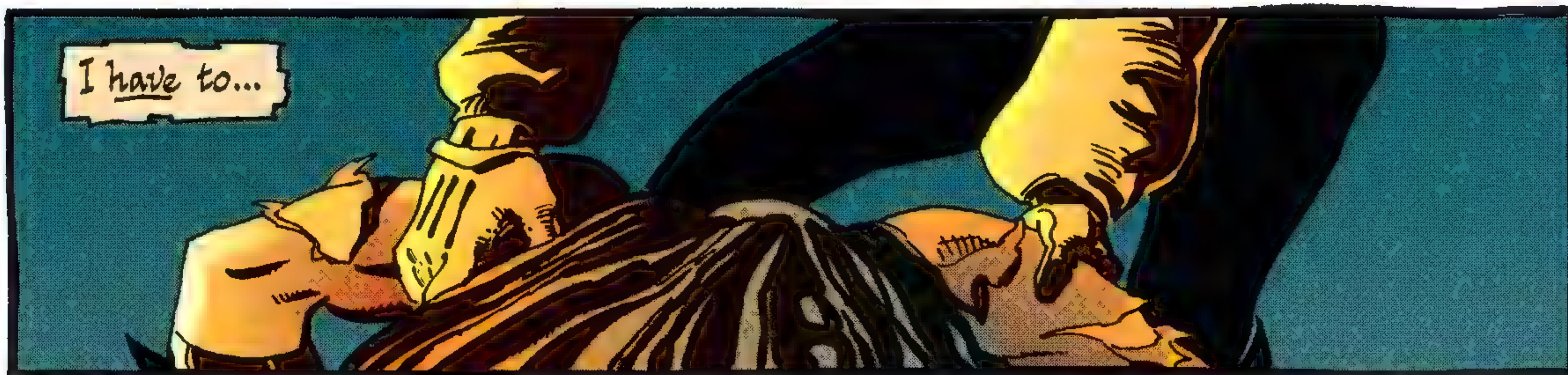
He should have dived clear.



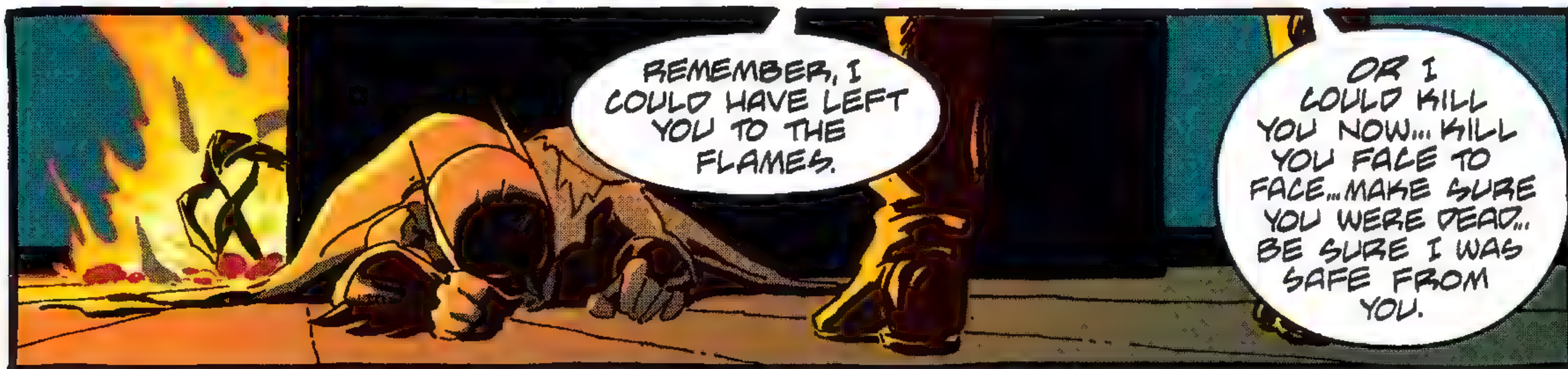
I thought he'd--

Why doesn't he do something?

I have to go...too much counting on my escape.



I have to...



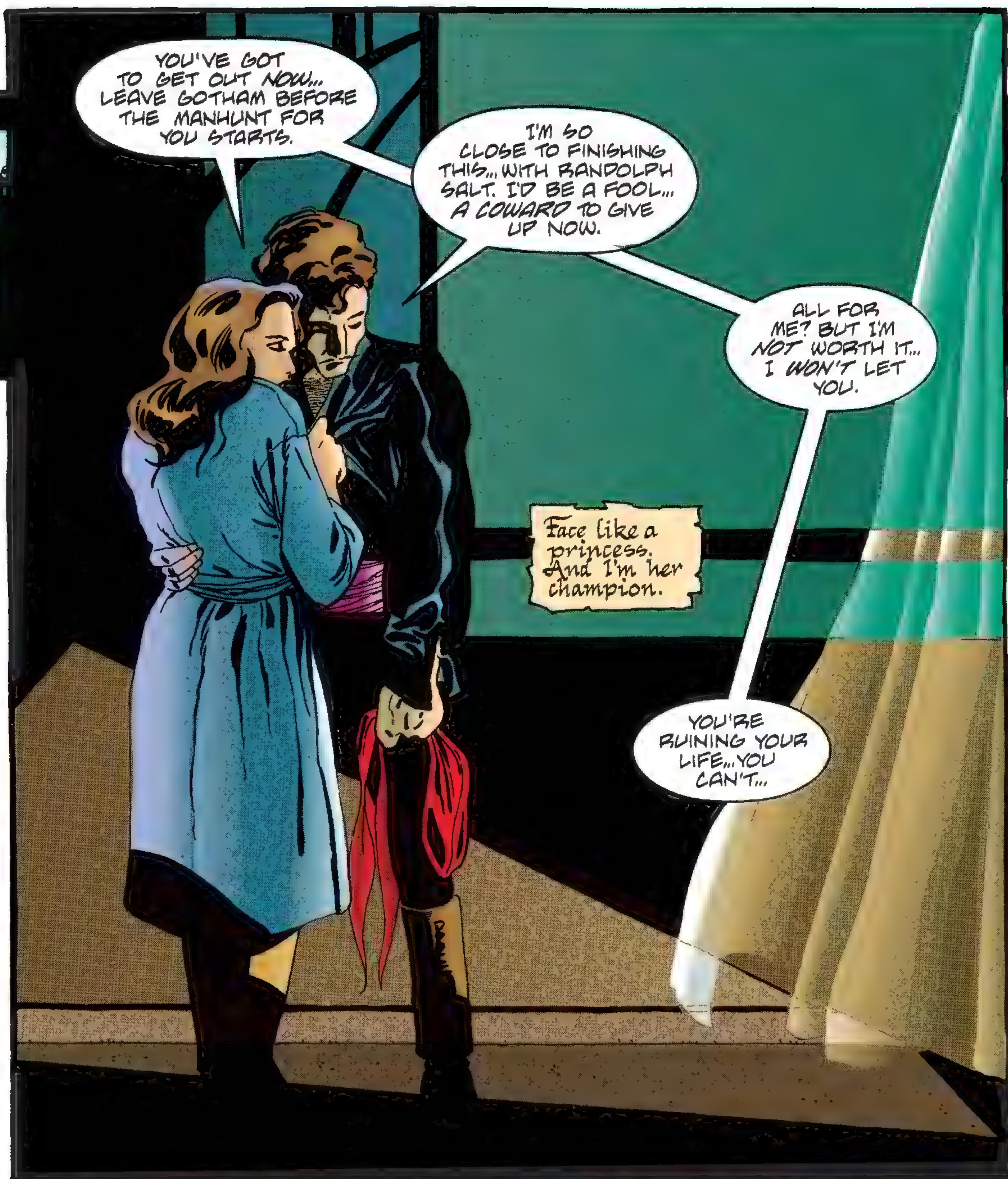
REMEMBER, I COULD HAVE LEFT YOU TO THE FLAMES.

OR I COULD KILL YOU NOW... KILL YOU FACE TO FACE... MAKE SURE YOU WERE DEAD... BE SURE I WAS SAFE FROM YOU.



IF I WERE A MURDERER.

UNTIL NEXT TIME... BATMAN. ADIEU!



To be continued.



LEGEND OF THE DARK MITE

Grant ▼ O'Neill



"GET THIS STRAIGHT
RIGHT FROM THE
START--

"THIS IS NOT
AN IMAGINARY
STORY!"

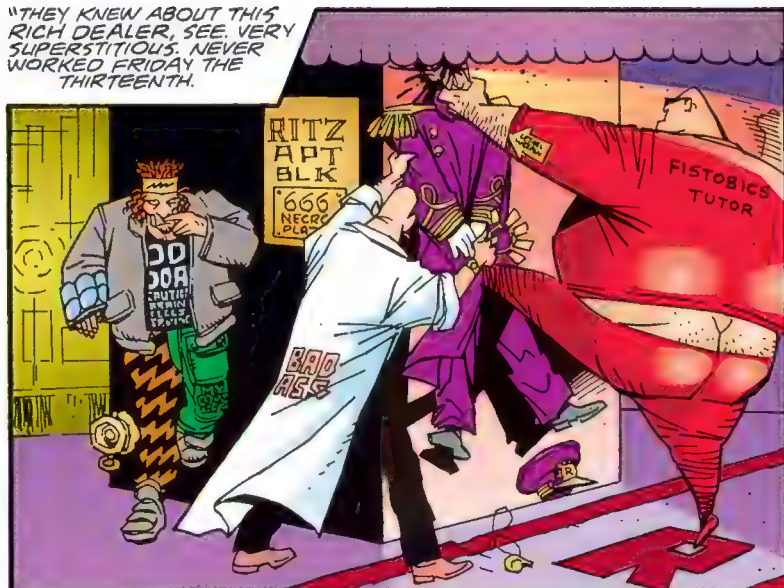
SCRIPT: ALAN GRANT - POP - KEVIN O'NEILL - POP - ART: KEVIN O'NEILL - POP - COLORS: OLY OPTICS - POP - LETTERS: JOHN WORKMAN

ASSISTANT EDITOR: BILL KAPLAN • EDITOR: ARCHIE GOODWIN
BATMAN CREATOR: BOB KANE





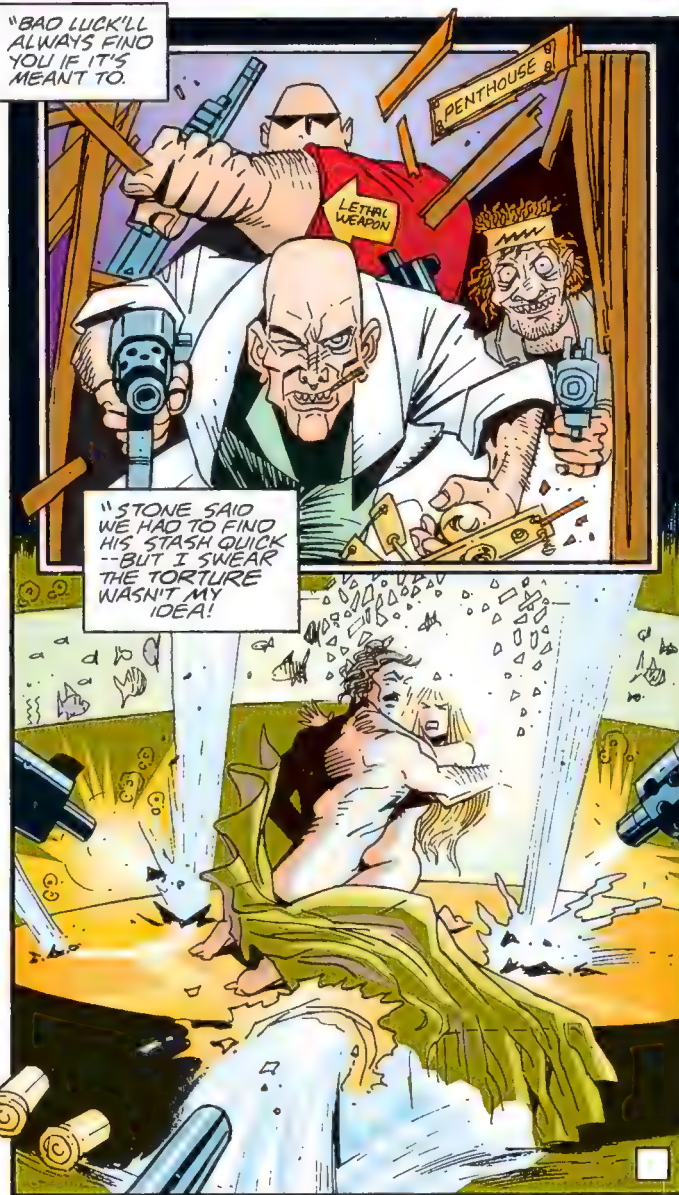
"THEY KNEW ABOUT THIS RICH DEALER, SEE. VERY SUPERSTITIOUS. NEVER WORKED FRIDAY THE THIRTEENTH."



"GAVE HIS MEN THE DAY OFF AN' STAYED IN BED. IT'S TRUE WHAT THEY SAY, THOUGH--"

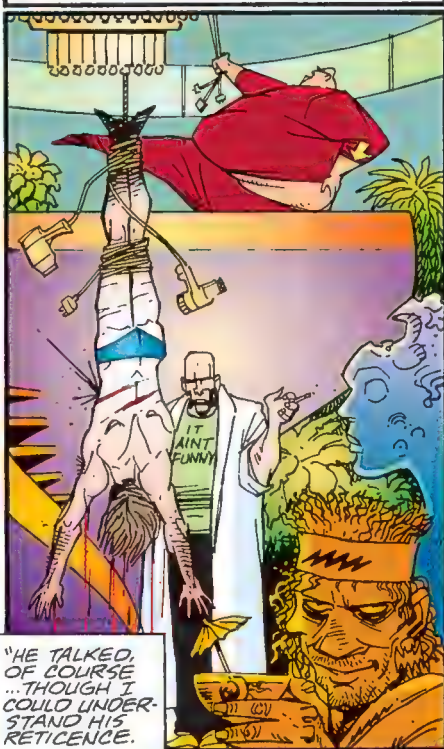


"BAD LUCK'LL ALWAYS FIND YOU IF IT'S MEANT TO."



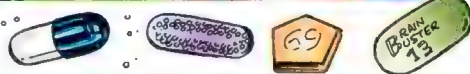
"STONE SAID WE HAD TO FIND HIS STASH QUICK --BUT I SWEAR THE TORTURE WASN'T MY IDEA!"

"CHECK THE POTATO PEELER, MAN! AIN'T MY PRINTS YOU'LL FIND!"



"HE TALKED, OF COURSE ...THOUGH I COULD UNDERSTAND HIS RETICENCE."

"COKE... SMACK... UPPERS... HASHISH... CHINESE OPIUM... TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS... THIS CREEP HAD THE LOT!"



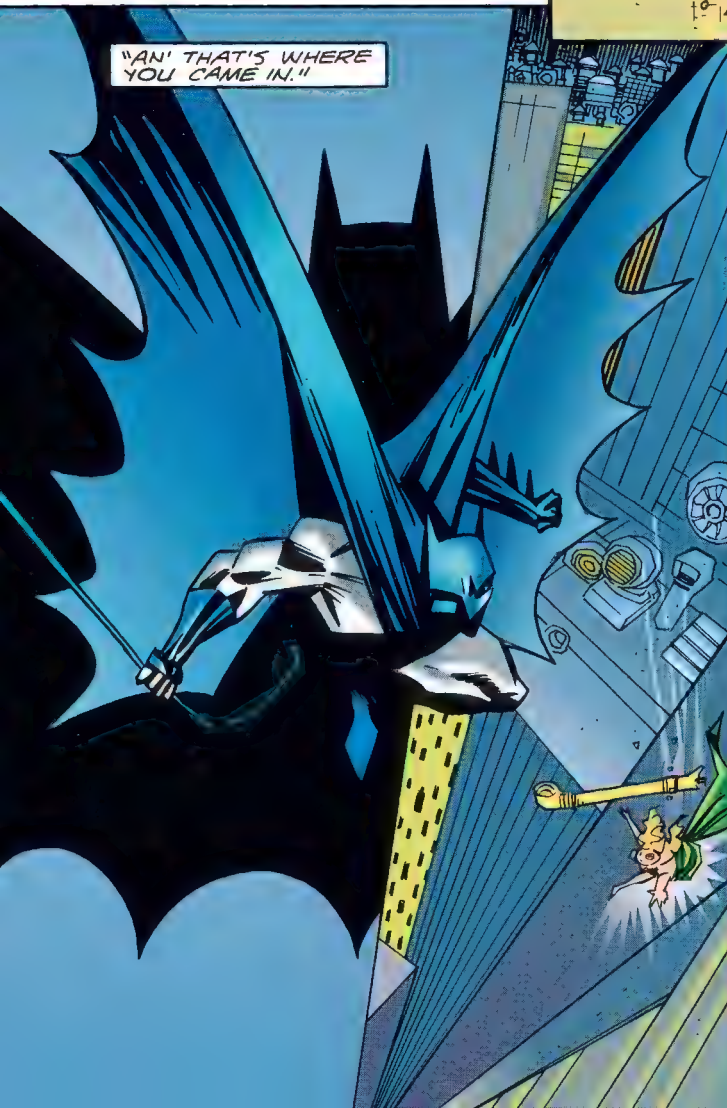
"HELL, THERE WAS EVEN A COUPLE OF CAPSULES OF Mescaline, PERSONAL USE, I GUESS--BUT FORMALDEHYDE WAS THE ONLY DRUG HE WAS NEEDIN' NOW!"



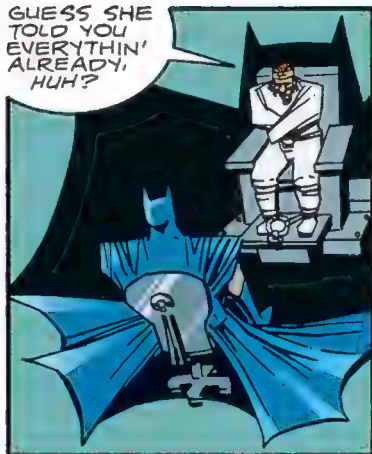
HEY... WHERE'D CREEPO'S GIRL-FRIEND GO?



"AN' THAT'S WHERE YOU CAME IN."



GUESS SHE
TOLD YOU
EVERYTHIN'
ALREADY,
HUH?

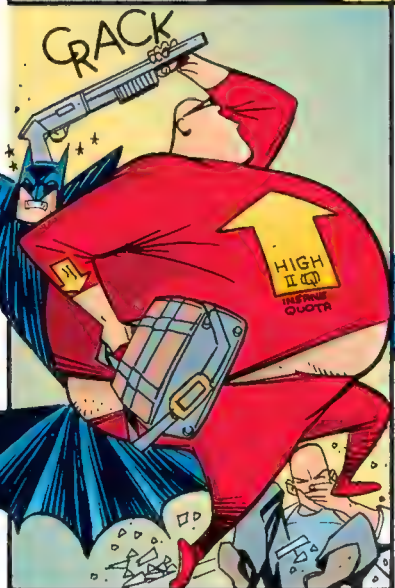


I WANT
TO HEAR IT
FROM YOU,
BOB.

SO WHAT
HAPPENED
NEXT?



HEY, YOU KNOW
THAT BETTER
THAN ME,
MAN!



"I WAS OUTTA THERE
LIKE A BAT OUTTA HELL
--IF YOU'LL PARDON
THE EXPRESSION, WE
HAD A MEET SET WITH
JONNY CARLUSO.

"NO REASON I
SHOULDN'T KEEP IT.



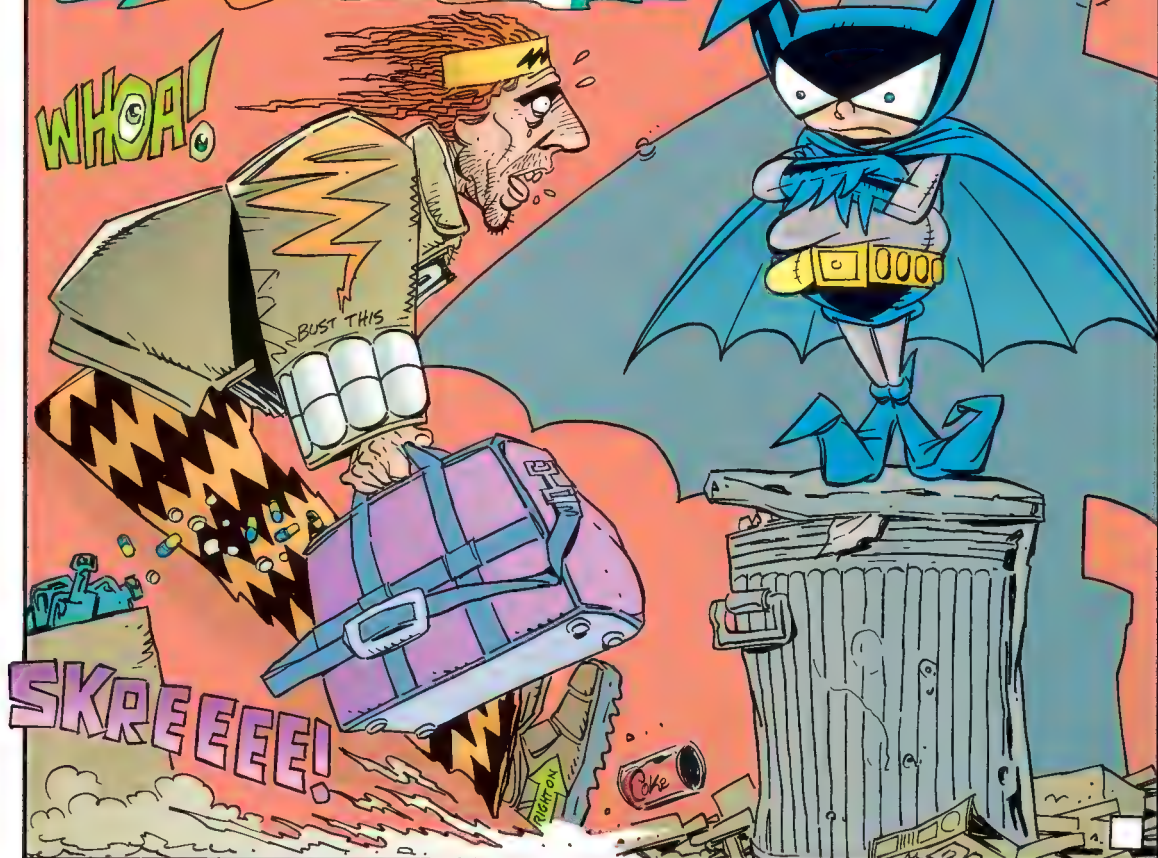
"THE MESCALINE WAS STARTIN' TO
COME ON IN SLOW, RIPPLIN'
WAVES, SMOOTHIN' OUT ALL THE
HASSLE.

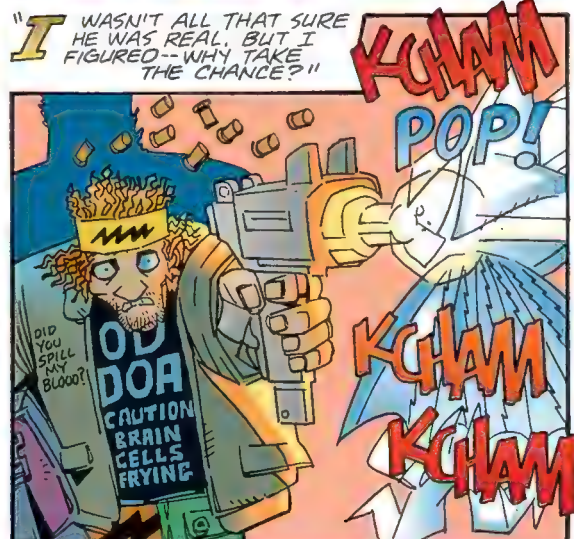
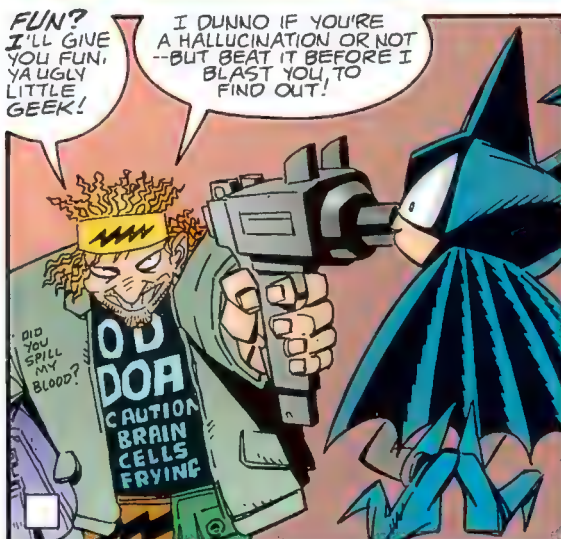


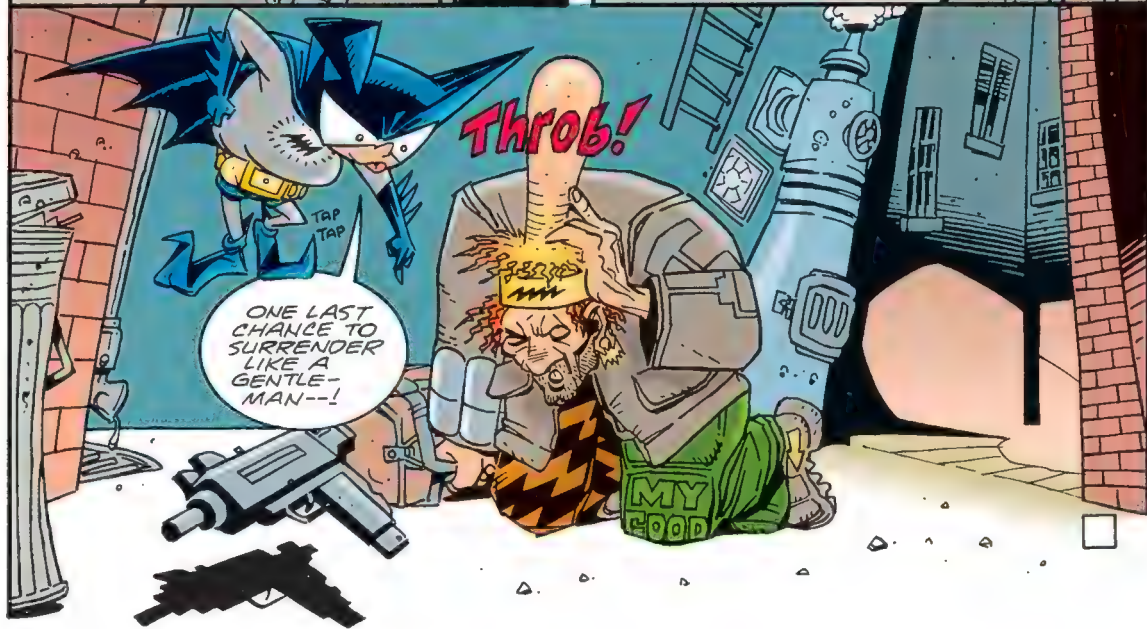
"I RELAXED, THE
WORLD WAS A
NICE PLACE.
STONE AN'
PETE WOULD
BE OKAY.
THEIR
KARMA
WOULD
PROBABLY
TAKE GOOD
CARE OF
THEM.

"A'N' THEN
I SAW
IT--

WHOA!







"IT WAS REAL, ALL RIGHT--
AN IT WAS GONNA KILL
ME! LUCKY FOR ME,
FATE TOOK A HAND..."

YO,
BOB!

JONNY!
JONNY
CARUSO!

WE GOT TIRED
O' WAITIN'
FOR YA.

WHAT'S
WRONG, MAN?
YOUR EYES
IS GOIN'
NUCLEAR!

THE JOB
GO OFF
OKAY?

YEAH. SURE. FINE.
DROPPED SOME
MESCALINE. NICE
STUFF. GOOD
TRIP.

YOU ONE
CRAZY
FREAK,
BOB!

BUT... UH...
I GOT ONE
LITTLE
PROBLEM...

TELL ME,
MAN--DO
YOU GUYS
SEE THAT
THING?

LITTLE
TYKE IN A
COSTUME?

SURE, WE
SEE HIM!
HEY--HOW'S
HE DO
THAT?

I WANT
YOU TO
BLOW IT
AWAY!

THAT CUTE
LITTLE
THING?

JUST
DO IT!

I'LL
GIVE YA
ALL THIS
DOPE!

HELL,
I'D SHOOT
MYSELF
FOR THAT,
MAN!

LIGHTS
OUT,
SUCKER!

BAM BAM!

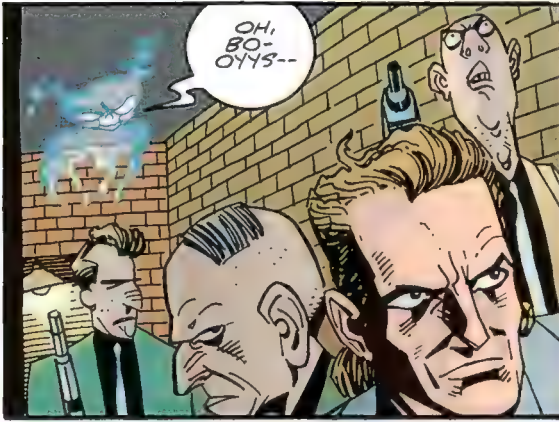
BRATAT
TATATAT

POP!

BAM!

BAM!

HUH?
WHERE'D
HE GO?

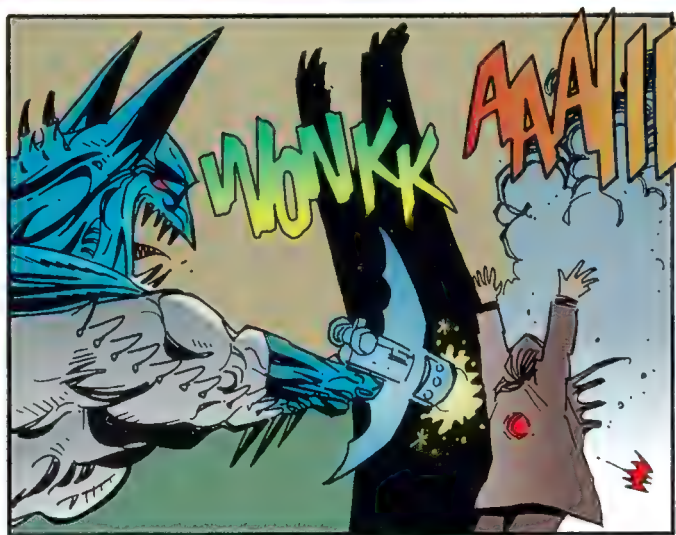
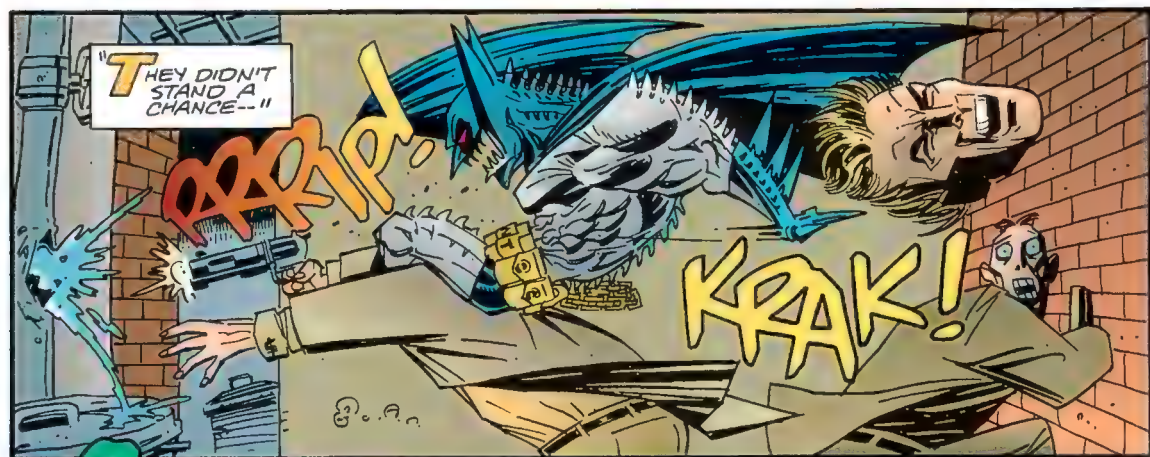


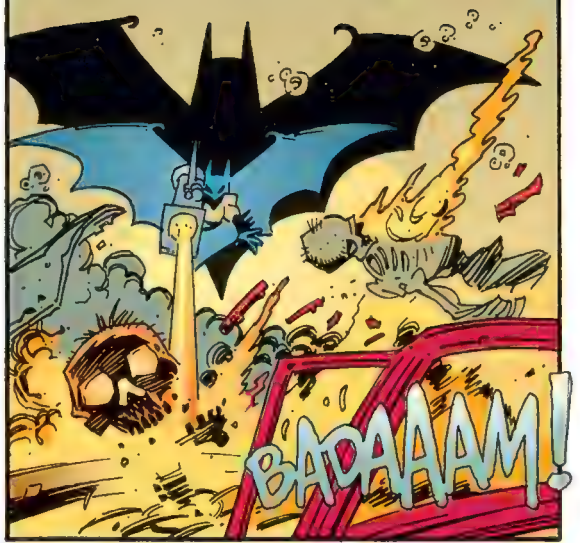
IT CHANGED
BEFORE MY VERY
EYES, MAN-- INTO
A DEMON
STRAIGHT OUT
OF HELL!
BANG WENT THE
GOOD TRIP, I
CAN TELL YA!

"SNARLIN' AND
SPITTIN'
LIKE SOME
OBSCENE DERVISH,
IT LAUNCHED
ITSELF AT
JONNY AND HIS
DUDES--"



"THEY DIDN'T
STAND A
CHANCE--"

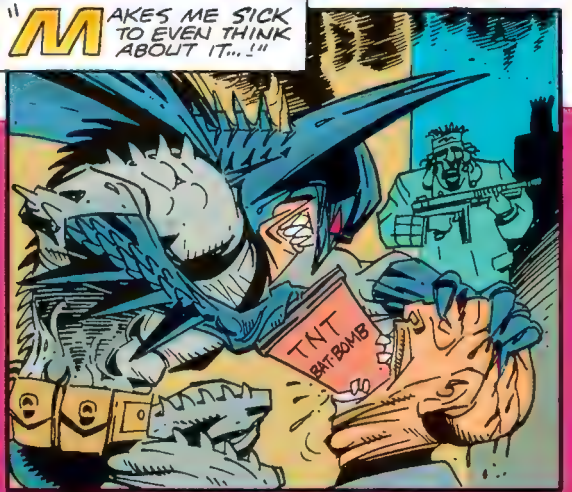




"IT WAS A NIGHTMARE, MAN..."

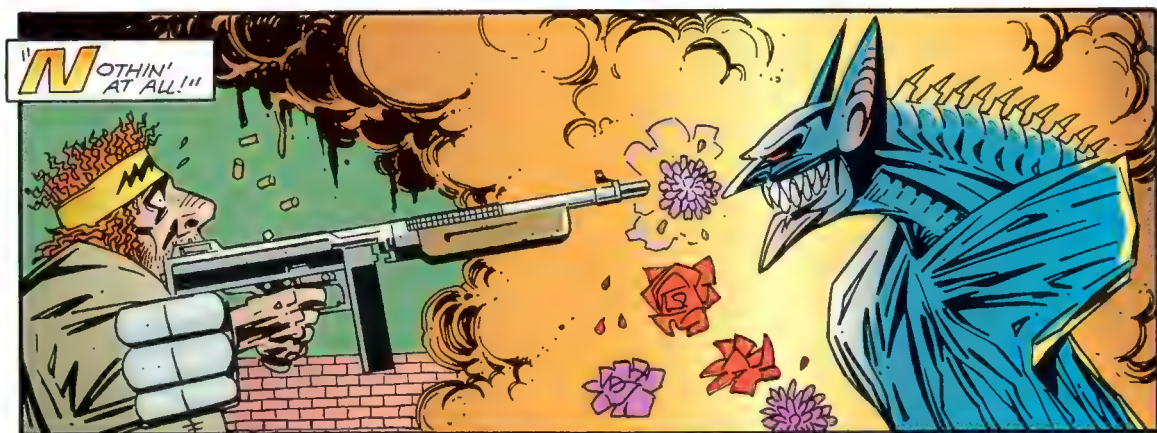


"MAKES ME SICK TO EVEN THINK ABOUT IT..."

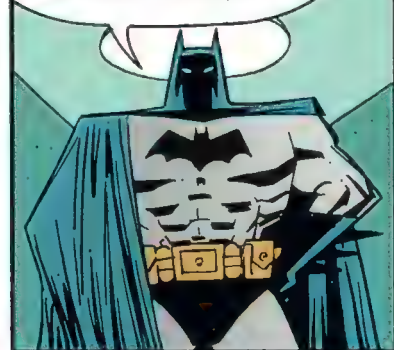


BAM!
UMPH!

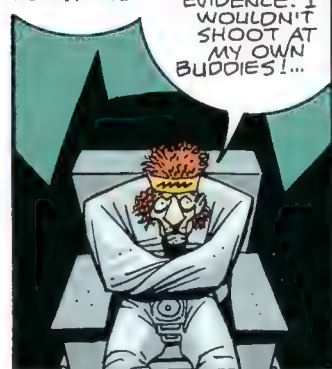




ACCORDING TO POLICE FORENSIC, THESE MEN DIED FROM BULLET WOUNDS, OVERDOG! BULLETS FIRED BY YOU IN YOUR DRUG-INDUCED MANIA!



NO! THAT'S A LIE! ALL MY BULLETS TURNED TO FLOWERS!



THAT MONSTER DOCTORED THE EVIDENCE! I WOULDN'T SHOOT AT MY OWN BUDDIES!...

CONVENIENT NONE OF THEM ARE ALIVE TO DISAGREE ...!



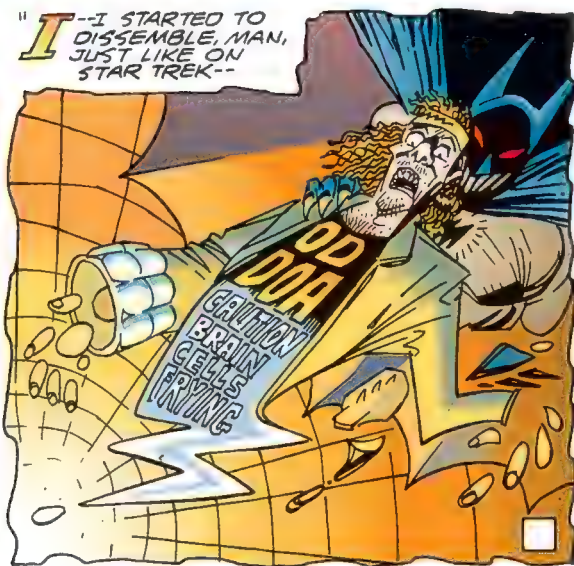
"THE TRIP WAS GETTIN' OUTTA HAND. I WAS IN BAD NEED OF A MASSIVE DOSE OF VITAMIN C AN' A COUPLE OF DOZEN DOWNERS!"



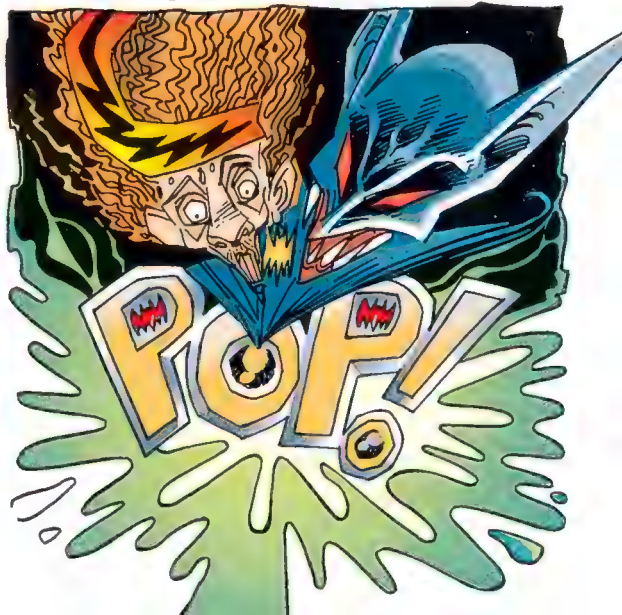
"BUT THAT THING WASN'T FINISHED WITH ME YET--NOT BY A LONG SHOT!"

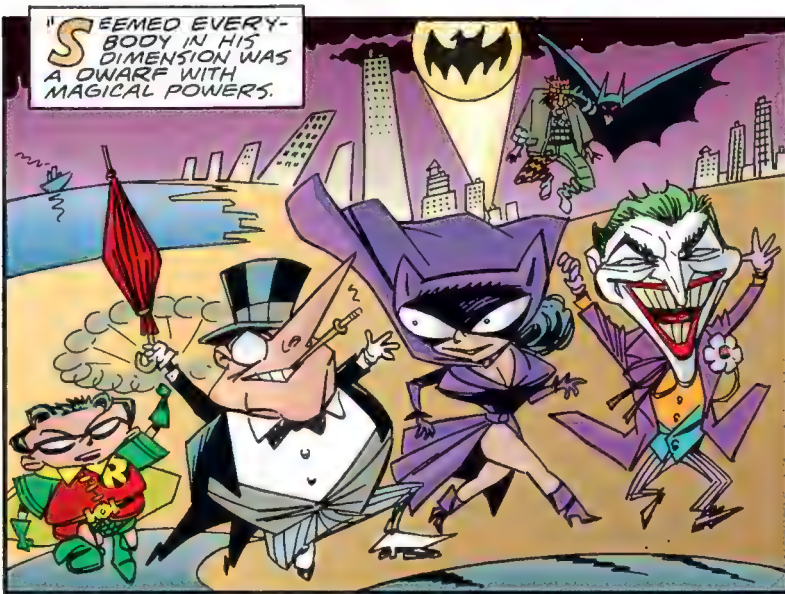


"I--I STARTED TO DISSEMBLE, MAN, JUST LIKE ON STAR TREK--"



"THEN POP! MY GUTS WERE TURNED INSIDE-OUT AN' MY BRAIN FELL OUT MY BUTT AN' WE WERE TUMBLIN' OVER AND OVER--"





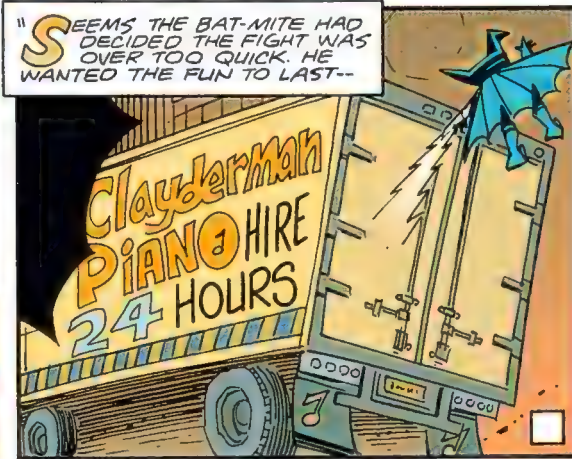
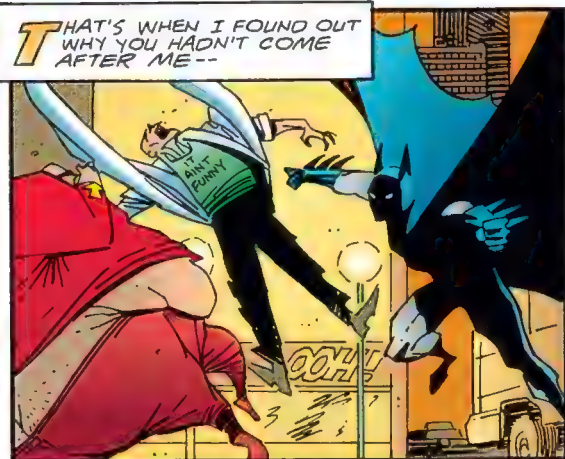
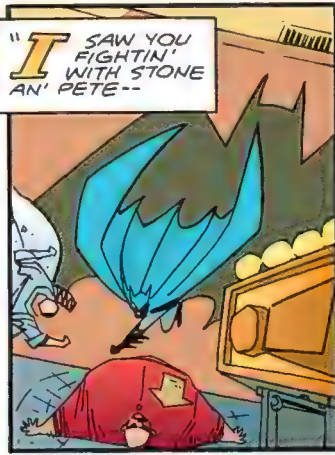
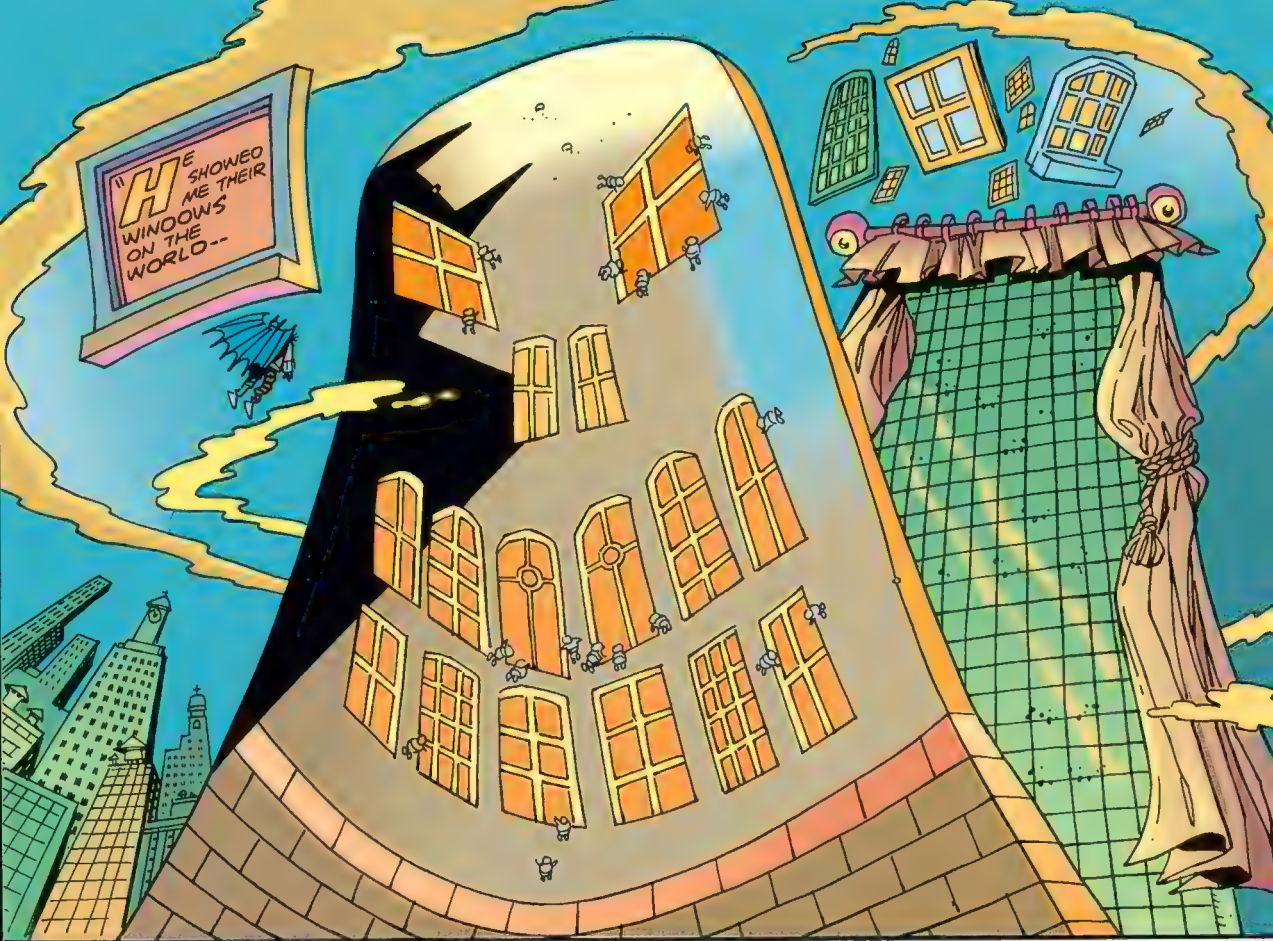
"THEY GET THEIR KICKS DRESSIN' UP AS SUPER-HEROES FROM EARTH AN' PLAYIN' GAMES WITH EACH OTHER--"

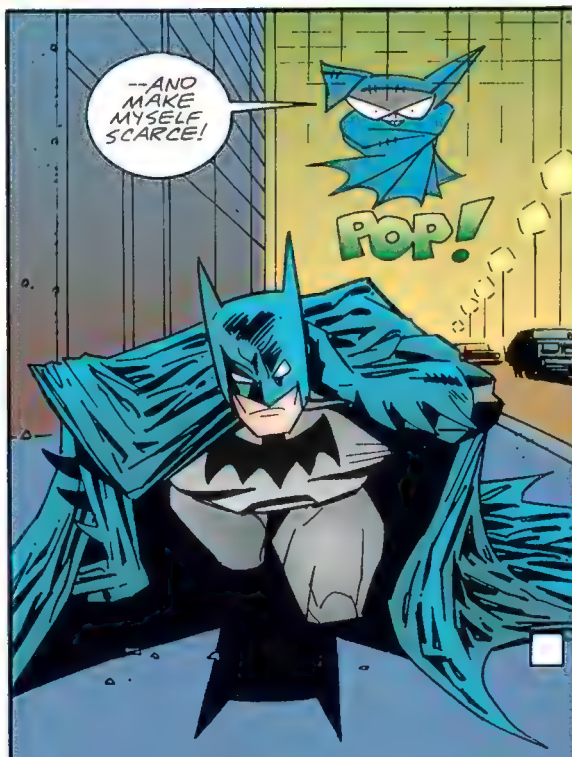
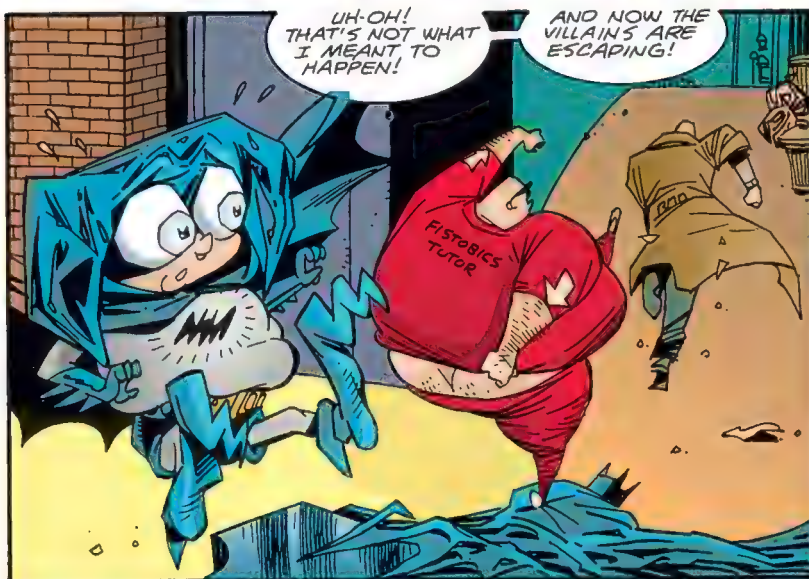


"A N' WEIRDEST
OF ALL--IT,
WAS REAL!"

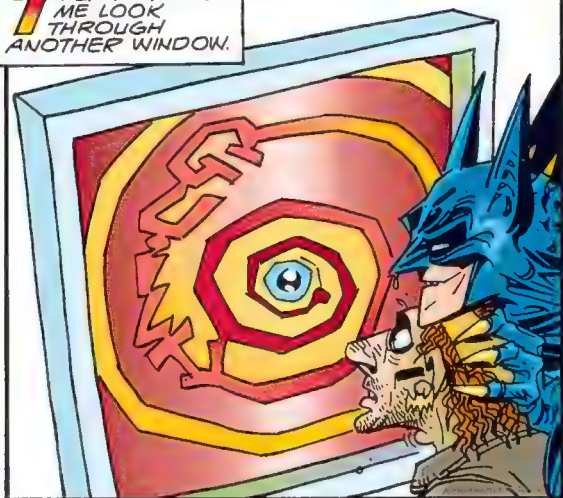
29



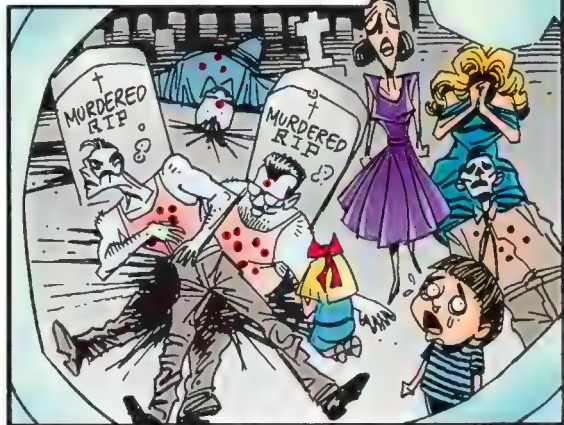




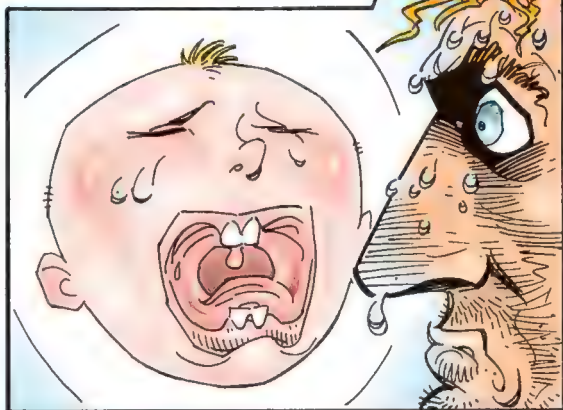
"**T**HEN HE MADE
ME LOOK
THROUGH
ANOTHER WINDOW.



"**I** SAW WIDOWS MOURNING
OVER THE BODIES OF
MEN THAT I'D KILLED.
I HEARD THEIR CHILDREN
WAIL--



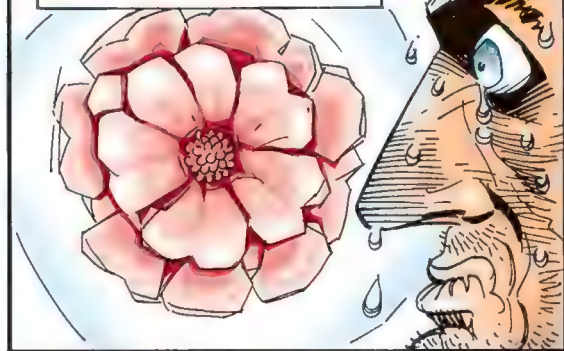
"**I** COULD FEEL SOMETHING
STARTING TO HAPPEN
DEEP INSIDE ME. SOME-
THING AWESOME... SOME-
THING THAT DIDN'T DEPEND
ON DRUGS--



"**I** SAW THAT LIFE
WAS A TINY,
FRAGILE
FLOWER.

"**I**T NEEDED
NURTURE
--CARE--
LOVE.

"**Y**ET I'D SPENT ALMOST
ALL MY YEARS
HATING IT.



"**I** WAS
GUILTY
OF A
TERRIBLE
SIN.

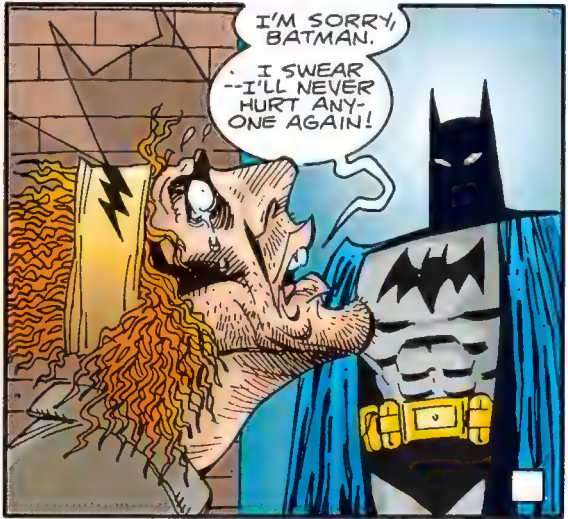
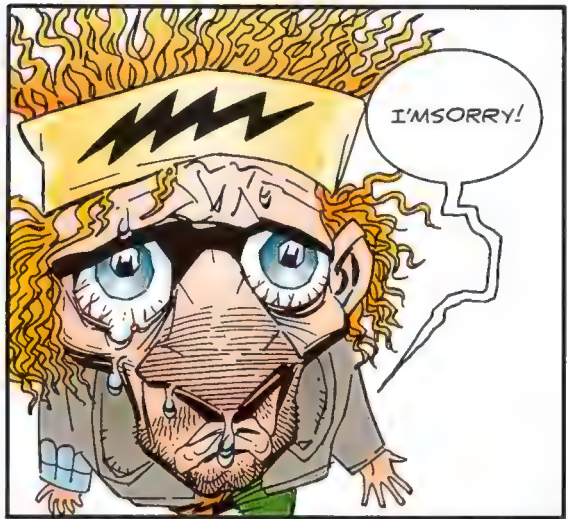
"**I** COULD HARDLY
SEE FOR TEARS
AS I TURNED TO
LOOK AT BAT-MITE--"

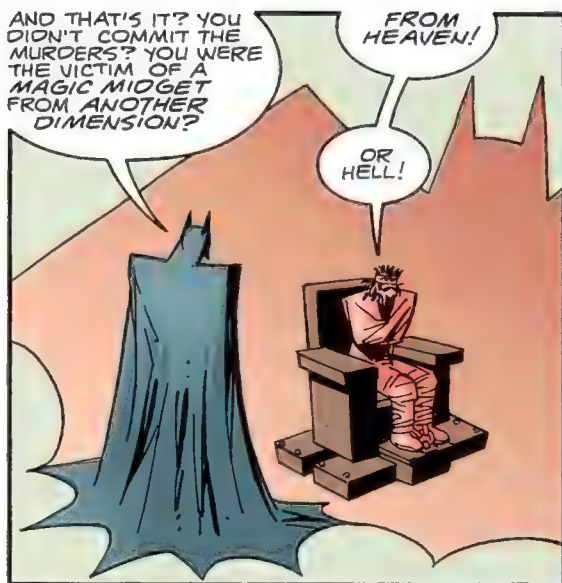
WHY? WHY
ARE YOU
DOING THIS
TO ME?

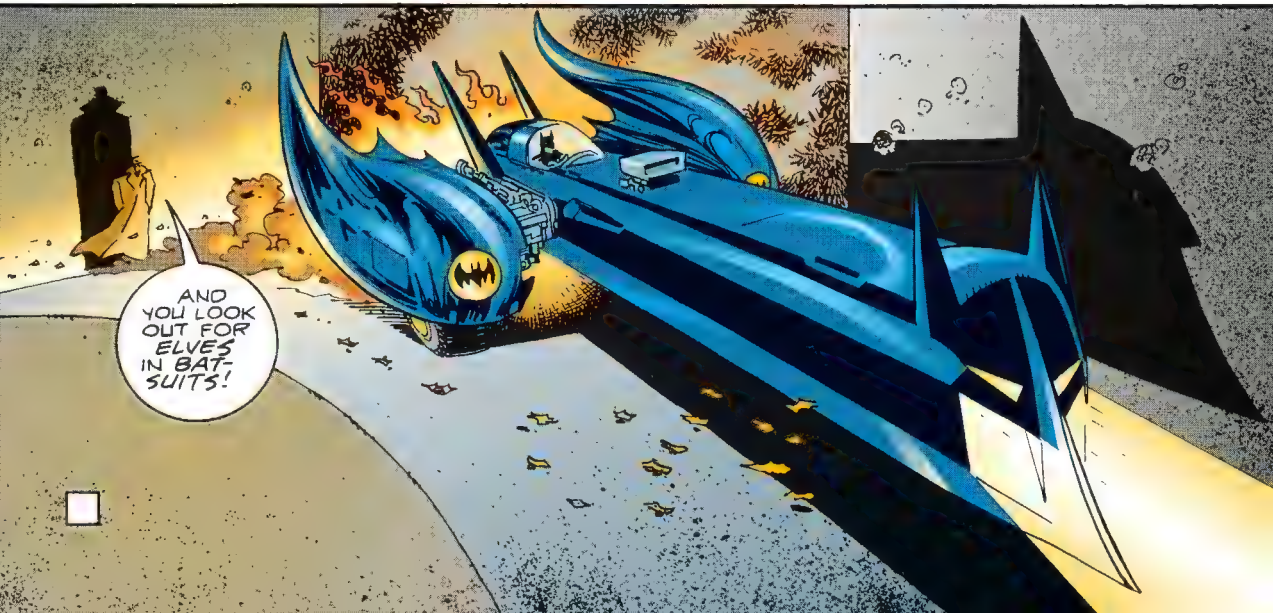
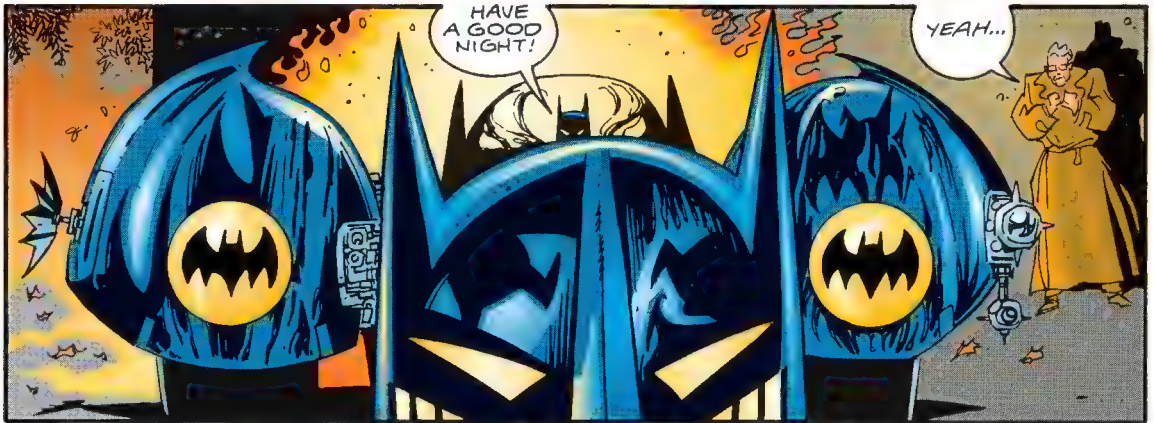
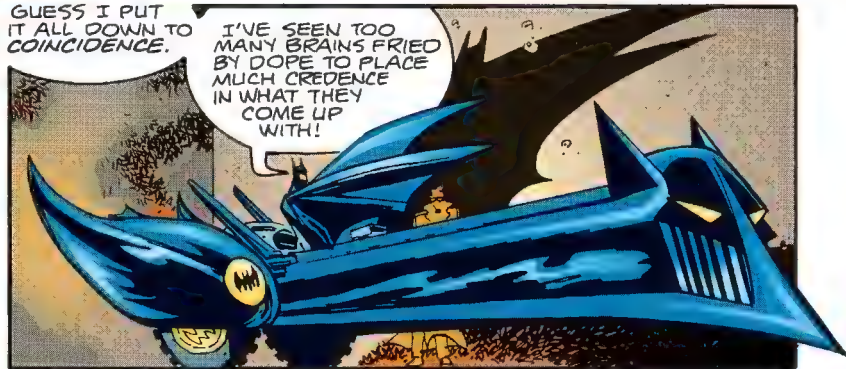
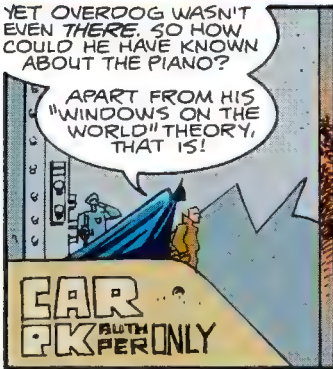
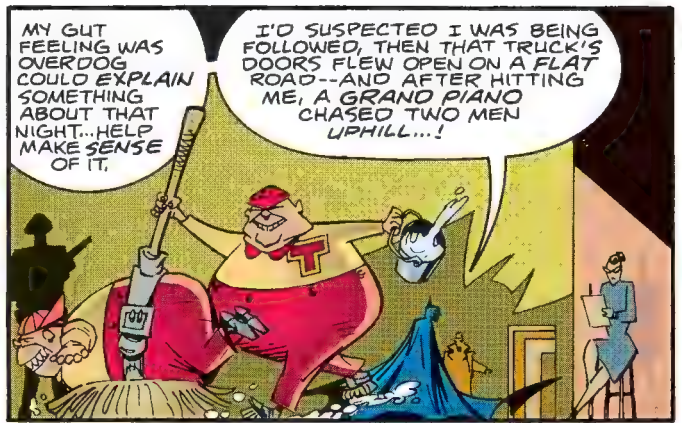
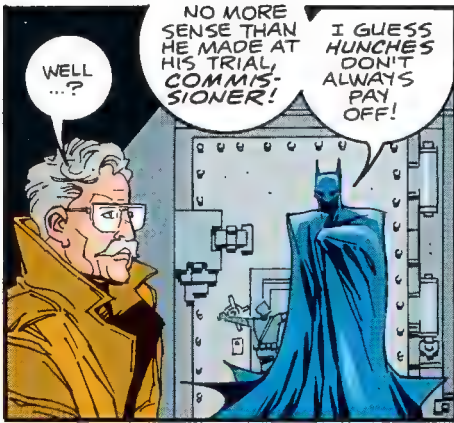
WHO
ARE
YOU?

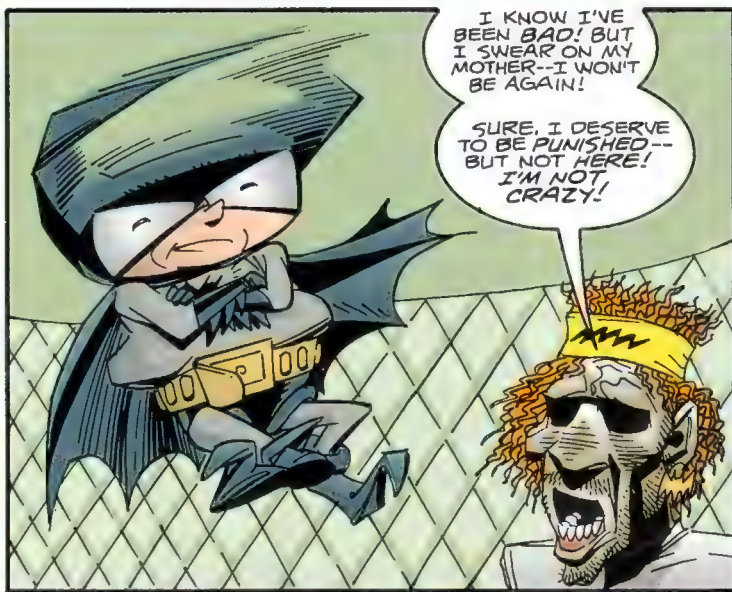


A N' SUDDENLY
I KNEW--!"













Y-YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND-- GET TOO CLOSE AND SHE'LL KILL YOU-- KILL YOU WITH SOFT WHISPERED PROMISES--OF MONEY-- OF SEX-- OF LOVE--

P.C.R. #35

AND YOU'LL DO ANYTHING FOR HER-- GIVE HER EVERYTHING--

WHILE SHE RIPS OUT YOUR HEART-- BLACKENS YOUR SOUL--

AND LEAVES YOU WITH NOTHING.

NOTHING

BRUCE! YOU'RE LATE!

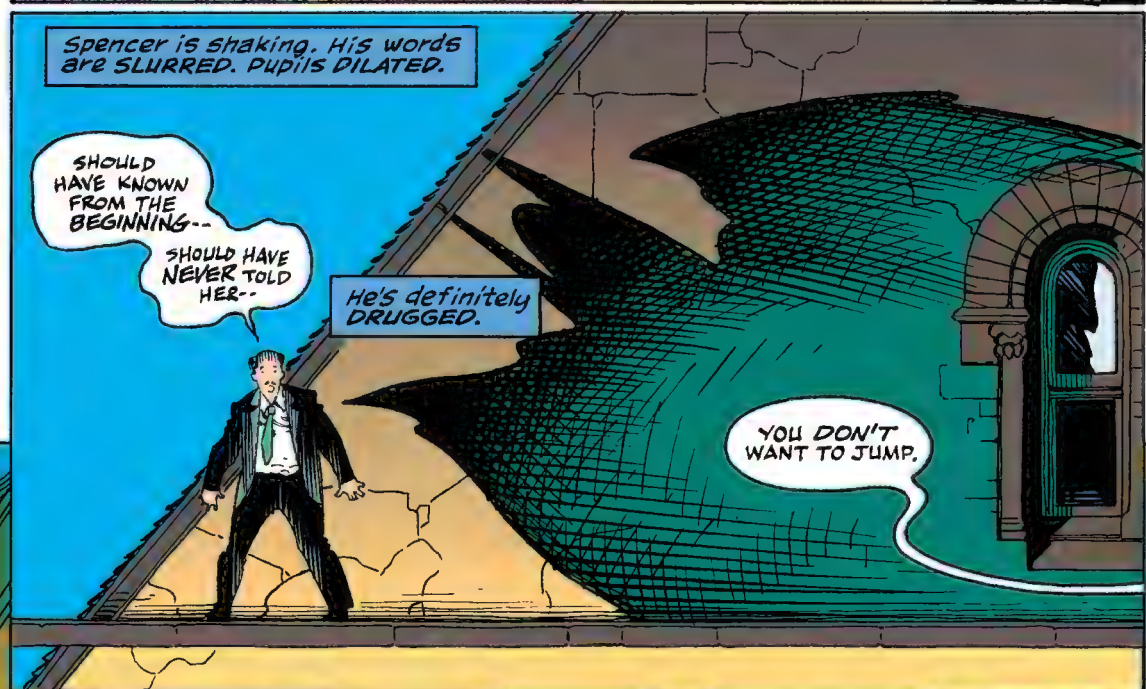
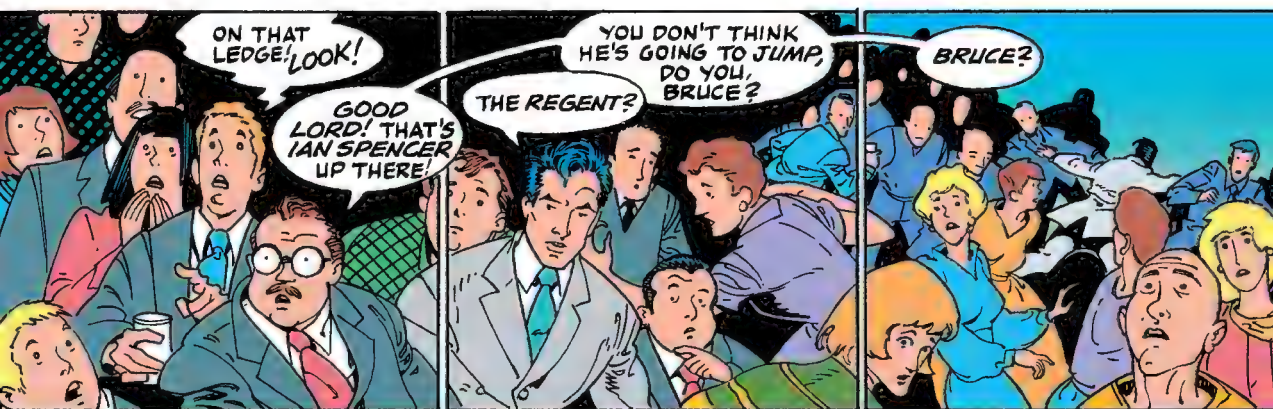
SORRY, BUSINESS. I WAS ON WITH TOKYO FOR TWO HOURS. I MISS ANYTHING?

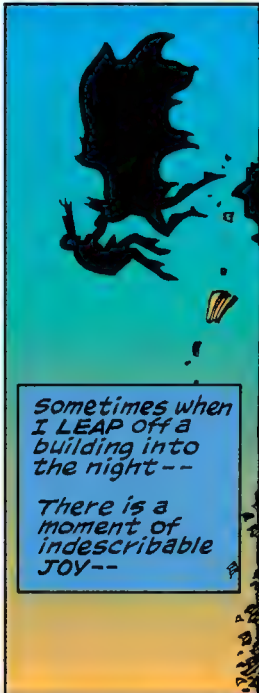
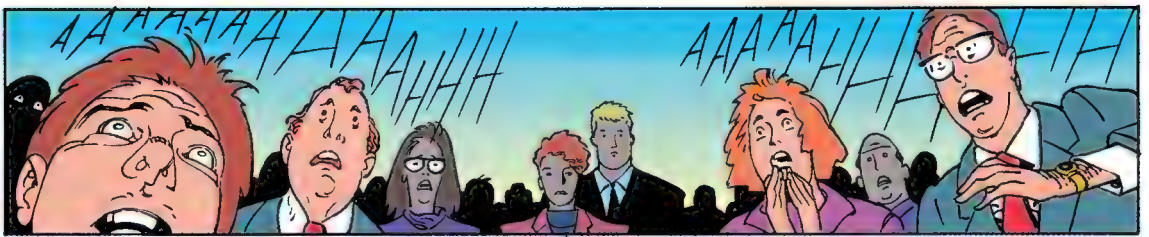
THE USUAL HEARTFELT "GIVE 'TIL IT HURTS" SPEECH.

BRING YOUR CHECK-BOOK?

DEAN, YOU ALWAYS GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT,

?
HEY...





Sometimes when I LEAP off a building into the night--
There is a moment of indescribable JOY--



--the RUSH of the wind-- the taste of ADRENALINE.



-- but in these UNEXPECTED instants of life and death--



--freefall is NO pleasure.



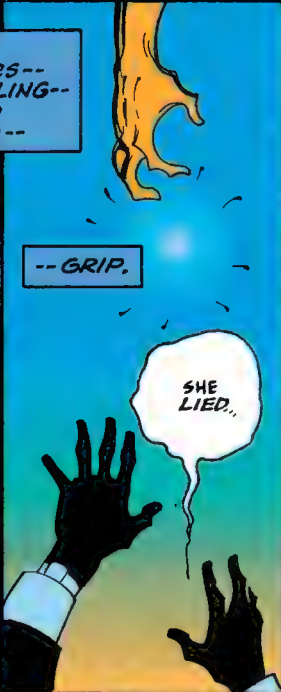
I HAVE YOU! HANG ON!!

I can feel my arm almost yanked out of the socket.



SHE SAID I COULD TRUST HER.

SPENCER continues-- STRUGGLING-- trying to break my--

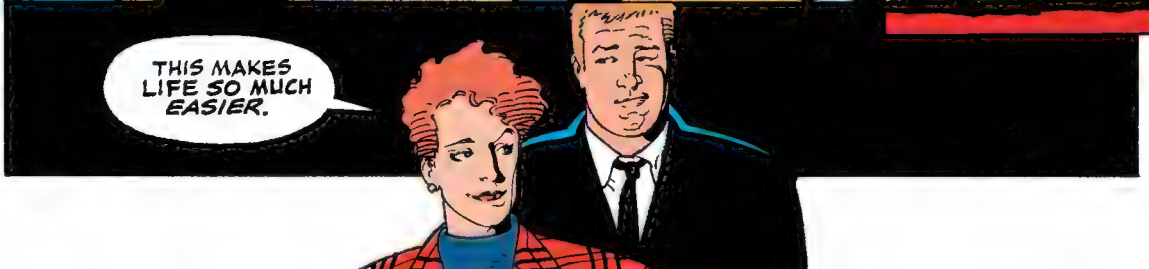


-- GRIP.

SHE LIED.



"DAMN."



THIS MAKES LIFE SO MUCH EASIER.

POISON

PART ONE

JOHN FRANCIS MOORE
writer

P. CRAIG RUSSELL
artist

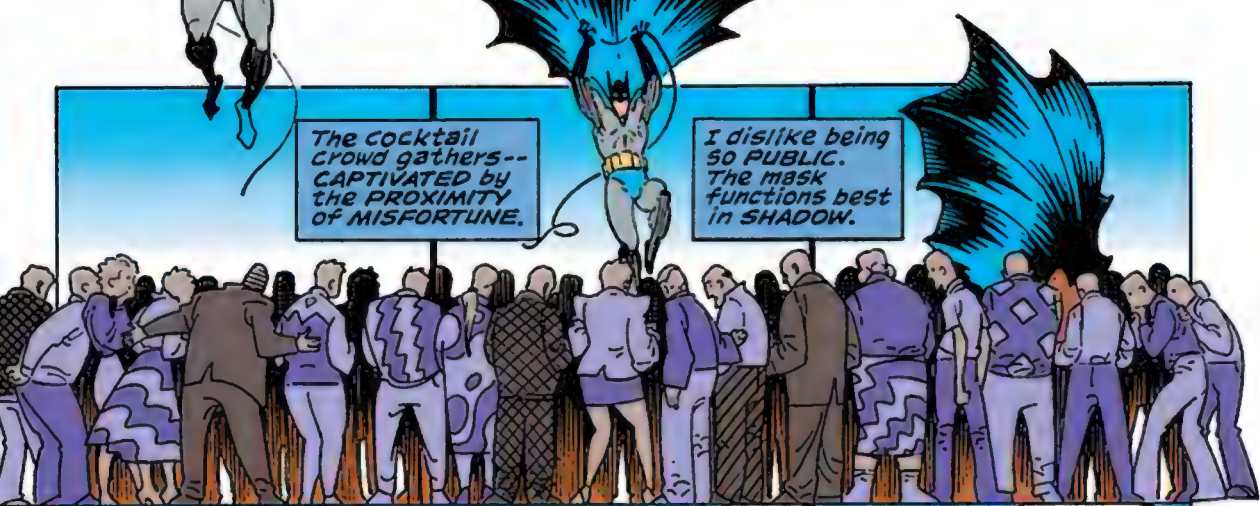
DIGIT AL CHAMELEON
colors

BILL PEARSON
letters

GOODWIN & KAPLAN edits
BATMAN created by BOB KANE



And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love --
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill
-- Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1855)



The cocktail crowd gathers--
CAPTIVATED BY
THE PROXIMITY
OF MISFORTUNE.

I dislike being
SO PUBLIC.
The mask
functions best
in SHADOW.

Like the man who WEARS it.

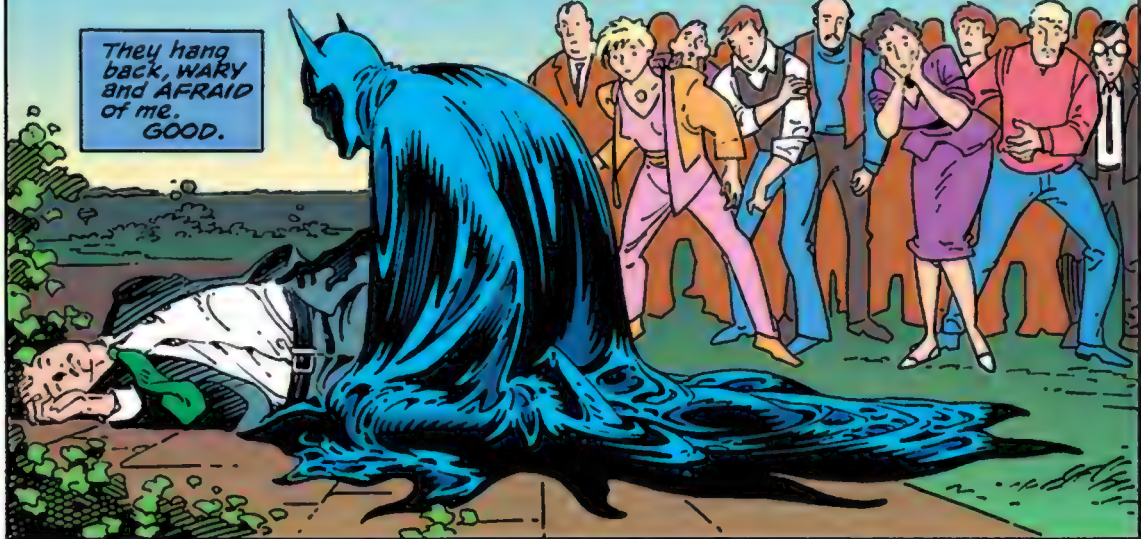
--IT'S--
LOOK--

--THE
BAT--
--REALLY--

--OFF THE
LEDGE--
--BIGGER--

--SOME KIND
OF HOAX--
--HUMAN?--

--NOT
TOO
CLOSE

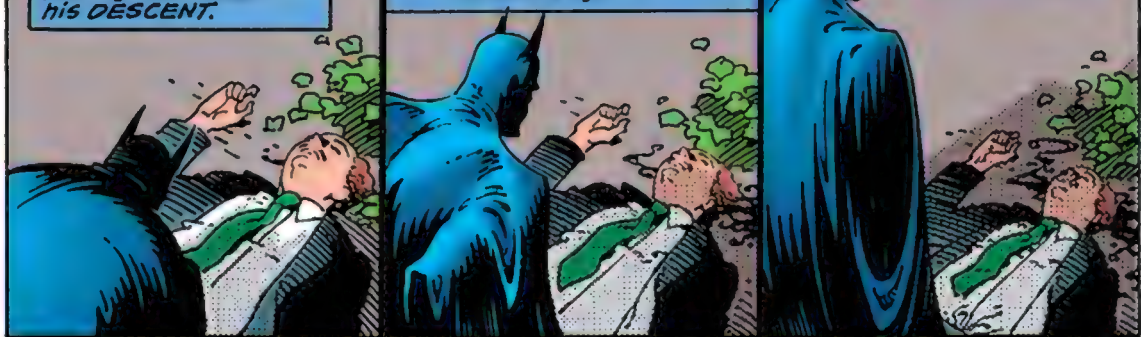


They hang
back, WARY
and AFRAID
of me.
GOOD.

I hope that Spencer's
fall wasn't fatal--
--that the drugs
relaxed his body and
the ivy cushioned
his DESCENT.

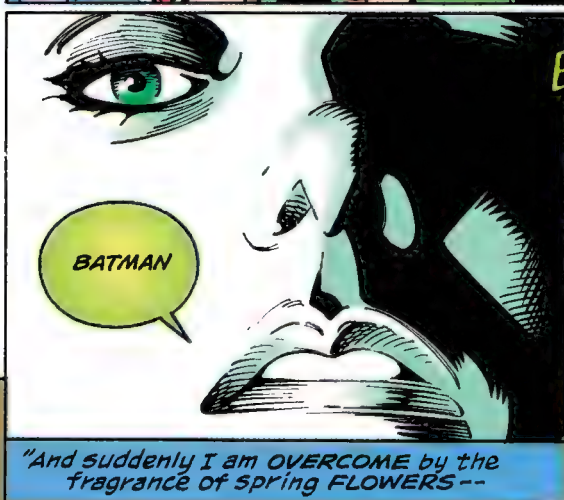
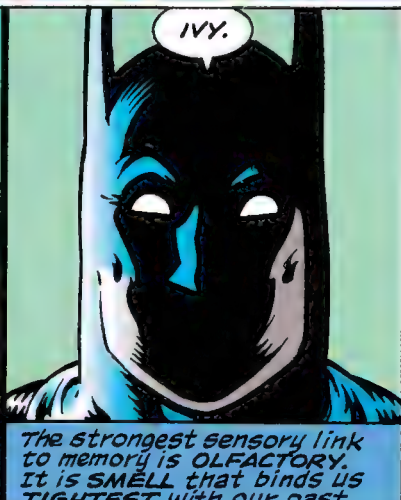
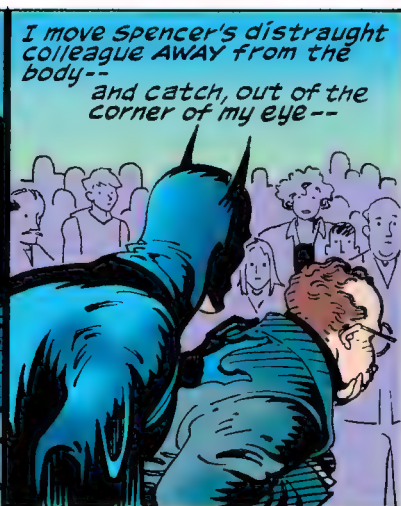
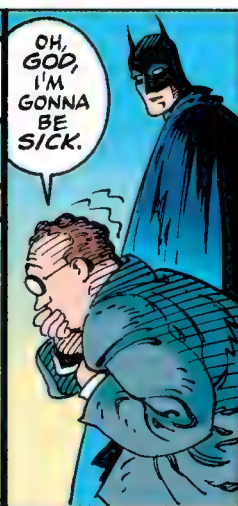
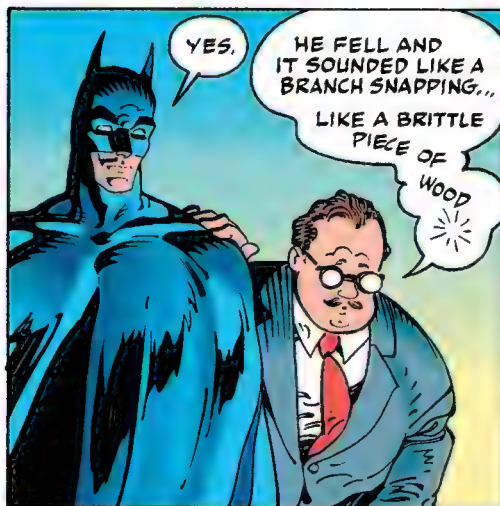
--but the ugly PURPLE hue
above his collar tells me
his neck is BROKEN.
Whatever drugged
pain he suffered
moments ago--

--IMPACT
ended for
him.



IS HE...





BATMAN
BATMAN
BATMAN



CALL
GORDON.
I'LL TALK
TO HIM.

SORRY IF I
STARE-- JUST
TRANSFERRED TO
METRO FROM
UPSTATE--
--NOTHING
LIKE THIS HAPPENS
IN ST. STEPHENS.

GOD, WHATTA
LONG WAY TO
FALL.

What is it about
Gotham that creates
such EXTREMES of
darkness and light--

WHAT DO
YOU THINK
MADE HIM
JUMP?

--that leads a
man through
SHADOW to
the edge?

Or is it
some-
thing
ELSE?

A WOMAN. In
his incoher-
ence, Spencer
kept raving
about a woman?

And IVY
is here
tonight.
COINCID-
ENCE?

I look for her, but she's gone--
--leaving UNSETTLING
possibilities.

Could SHE have
driven Ian Spencer
out his office win-
dow to the ledge?

Or is that a
romantic, politi-
cally incorrect
notion of BLACK
WIDOWS and
FATAL attraction?

In all likelihood
Spencer chose
his OWN path
to that catwalk.

Maybe we all
walk a narrow
precipice, a
thin rope, a
shaky bridge--

--and try our best
not to look DOWN.

IAN SPENCER,
FIFTY-FOUR, FORMER
CITY COUNCIL MEMBER,
GOTHAM UNIVERSITY
REGENT.

MARRIED
TWENTY-SIX
YEARS. TWO KIDS.
ONE'S A FRESH-
MAN HERE.

HISTORY OF
SUBSTANCE
ABUSE? CRIMINAL
RECORD?

CLEAN ALL
THE WAY AROUND.
SPENCER WAS A
CORNERSTONE
OF THE COM-
MUNITY.

NOT MY
FIRST CHOICE
FOR AN OVER-
DOSE OR A
SUICIDE.

NOT
OUR ONLY
CHOICES.

THERE'S NO EVIDENCE
OF ANYTHING ELSE.

BEFORE
HE FELL, SPENCER
RANTED ABOUT A
WOMAN RESPONSIBLE
FOR HIS TROUBLES.

GUILT OVER
AN AFFAIR? STILL
GOES TO
EMOTIONAL
INSTABILITY.

AGREED.
EXCEPT I SAW
SOMEONE IN
THE CROWD.

HERE.

SPENCER'S
FACULTY
FILES.

DID YOU
KNOW SHE
WORKED AT
THE UNI-
VERSITY?

PAMELA
ISLEY.
SPEAKING
OF EMOTIONAL
INSTABILITY.

WHAT DID
SHE CALL
HERSELF WHEN
SHE WAS CHASING
AFTER YOU LAST
SPRING?

POISON
IVY.

SHE'S
CURRENTLY
AT GOTHAM
ON A
SCIENCE
GRANT--

--ONE
SIGNED AND
APPROVED
BY IAN
SPENCER.

I THOUGHT SHE WAS STILL IN THE HOSPITAL. HER LAWYER ARGUED SHE WAS CRAZY.

CRAZY ABOUT ME.

SHE SUFFERED FROM A BIZARRE ENDOCRINE MUTATION--

HER TOUCH COULD CATALYZE VIOLENT MOOD ALTERATIONS.

THAT DOESN'T MEAN SHE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH SPENCER'S DEATH.

SHE WAS UNSTABLE, NOT HOMICIDAL. AND SHE COMPLETED HER REHABILITATION PROGRAM.

SHE WAS THERE TO WATCH HIM FALL.

CALL IT A HUNCH. TRUST ME.

ALONG WITH HALF THE FACULTY.

DAMN, YOU CAN NEVER FIND AN ASHTRAY ANY-MORE.

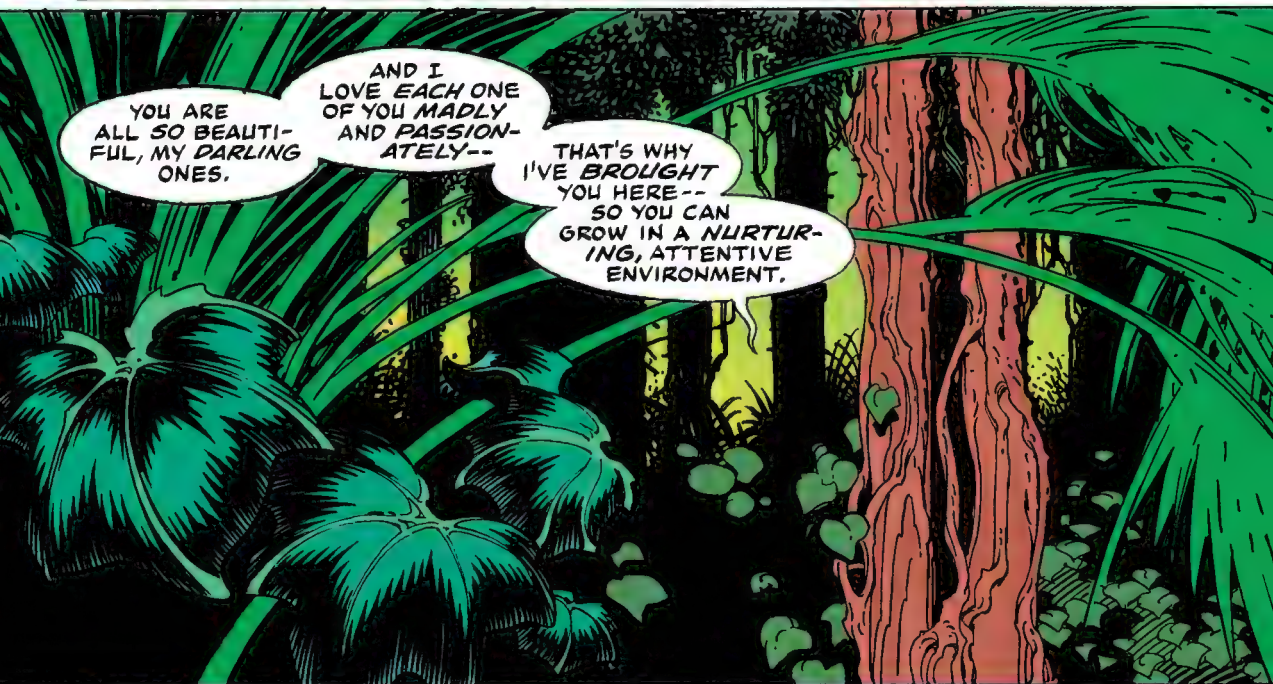
A SUGGESTION, CAPTAIN--

THOSE THINGS WILL KILL YOU, YOU SHOULD QUIT.

WHEN YOU QUIT YOUR MIDNIGHT RAMBLINGS, MAYBE.

HMMMPH!

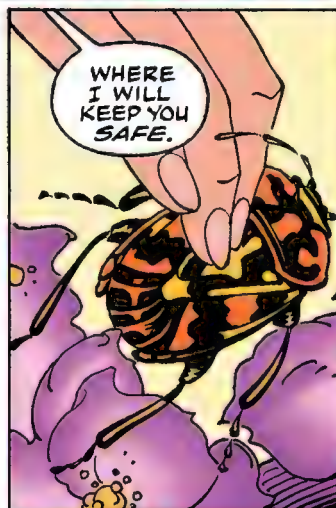
THE GREENHOUSE



YOU ARE
ALL SO BEAUTI-
FUL, MY DARLING
ONES.

AND I
LOVE EACH ONE
OF YOU MADLY
AND PASSION-
ATELY--

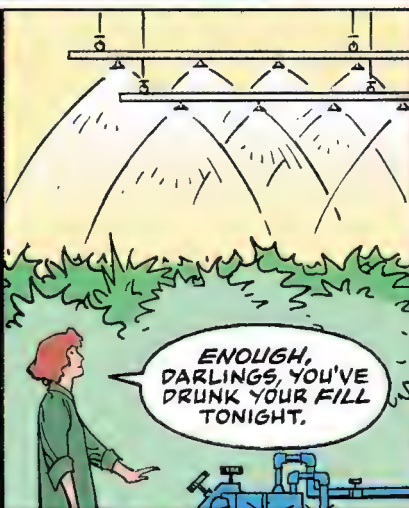
THAT'S WHY
I'VE BROUGHT
YOU HERE--
SO YOU CAN
GROW IN A NURTUR-
ING, ATTENTIVE
ENVIRONMENT.



WHERE
I WILL
KEEP YOU
SAFE.



--WHILE
YOU KEEP ME
COMPANY.



ENOUGH,
DARLINGS, YOU'VE
DRUNK YOUR FILL
TONIGHT.



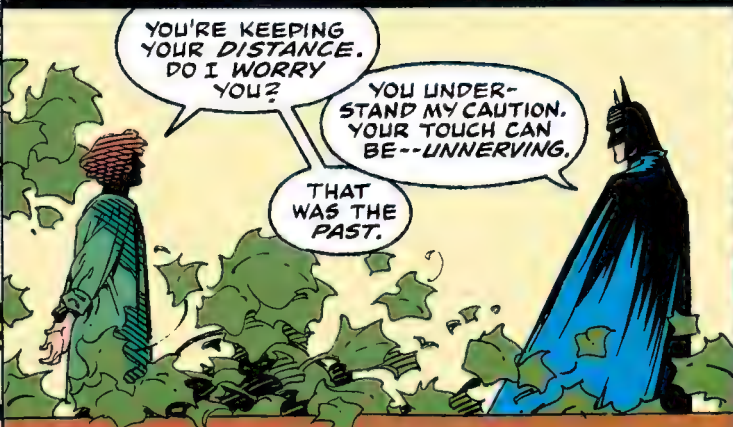
IVY.



IVY DOESN'T
EXIST ANYMORE.
IT'S PAMELA...

PAMELA
LILLIAN
ISLEY.

I
KNEW
YOU'D
FIND
ME.



YOU'RE KEEPING
YOUR DISTANCE.
DO I WORRY
YOU?

YOU UNDER-
STAND MY CAUTION.
YOUR TOUCH CAN
BE--UNNERVING.

THAT
WAS THE
PAST.

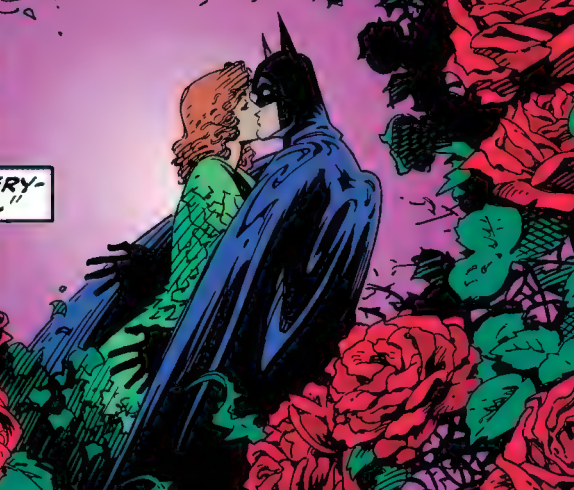
"I REMEMBER. You committed crimes
in order to draw me out."

"I WAS CONFUSED. I THOUGHT I loved
you. I thought you loved me."

"YOU KISSED me and nearly KILLED me."

"I WAS OUT OF CONTROL. I affected EVERY-
ONE I touched. I couldn't HELP myself."

"I know my behavior was OBSESSIVE,
but I'm BETTER now..."



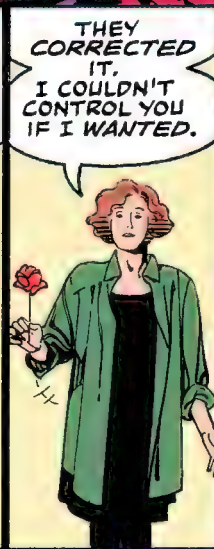
CURED.



YOU DON'T
BELIEVE
ME.



THE DOCTORS
FOUND MY SPE-
CIAL... TOUCH...
WAS DUE TO A
HORMONE
IMBALANCE.



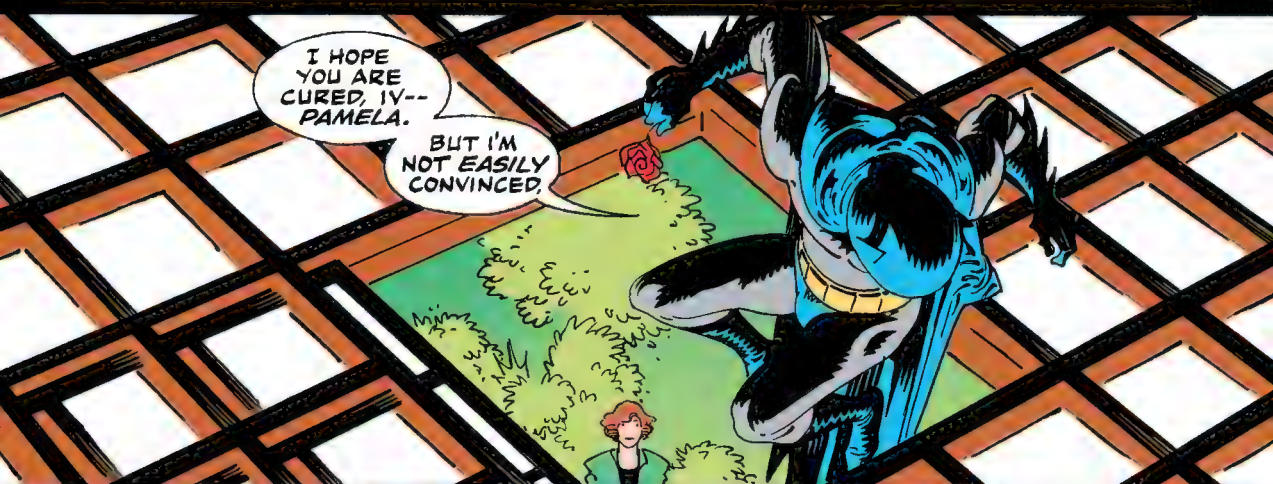
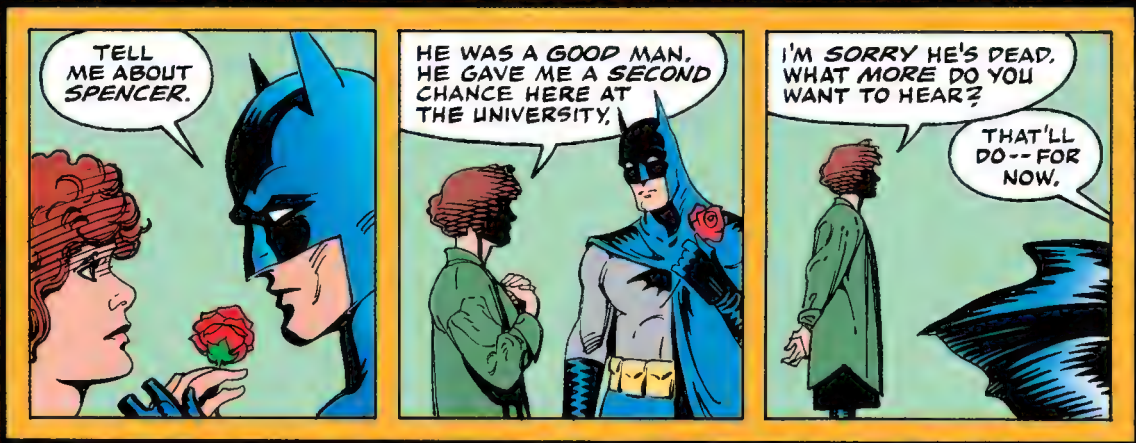
THEY
CORRECTED
IT.
I COULDN'T
CONTROL YOU
IF I WANTED.



AND
I'M OVER
YOU.

No electric jolt--
no overwhelming
stupor-- no loss
of focus--

Maybe she
is telling
the truth.

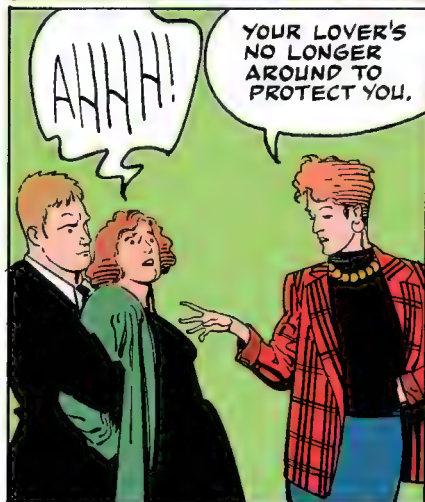




DON'T GET SMART WITH ME.

WHAT ABOUT THE POLICE?

FORGET ABOUT THE POLICE. SPENCER'S JUST ANOTHER JUMPER TO THEM. WORRY ABOUT ME!



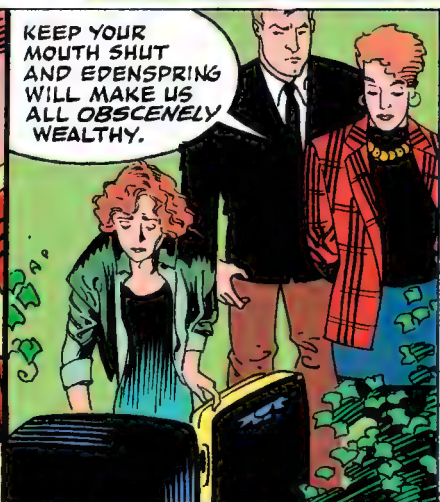
AAAAH!

YOUR LOVER'S NO LONGER AROUND TO PROTECT YOU.

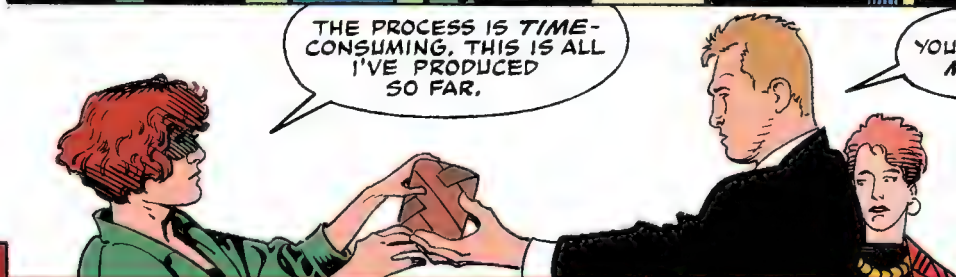


WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER NOW, RIGHT?

R-R-RIGHT



KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT AND EDENSPRING WILL MAKE US ALL OBSCENELY WEALTHY.



THE PROCESS IS TIME-CONSUMING, THIS IS ALL I'VE PRODUCED SO FAR.

YOU'LL MAKE MORE.



AND DON'T GET ANY IDEAS-- I KNOW ABOUT YOUR COSTUMED PAST--

POISON IVY, INDEED.

CROSS ME AND A LEAF BODY STOCKING WON'T BEGIN TO SAVE YOU.

4

THE BROWNSTONE

The TOWNSEND DISTRICT--an elite and upscale community of North Gotham.

Its residents want to believe their wealth PROTECTS them from crime and violence. Money guarantees NOTHING. I know.

Spencer's hidden wall safe was simple to find and SIMPLER to open.

In a private place he may have left a key to his OUT-OF-CHARACTER behavior.

Roughly half-a-million dollars-- all in non-sequential bills.

What is a university regent doing with this much CASH?

And LABORATORY VIALS-- important enough to lock in a safe.

Green like a JUNGLE. Green like a FOREST. Green like--

--IVY?

Spencer's WIDOW.

IS SOMEONE THERE?

TAK TAK TAK TAK

I'm missing something. Letting myself be distracted--

But it makes no sense. I checked with the hospital.

Her doctors confirmed her **REHABILITATION** and **RECOVERY**.

She **TOUCHED** me-- I'm **FINE**. She **CAN'T** have a hold on me.

Thousands of dollars in state-of-the-art forensic analysis hardware--

--backed up by ghost access to every international database.

All useless if I can't concentrate on the information before me--

EXCUSE ME, SIR.

BECAUSE I'M THINKING OF HER.

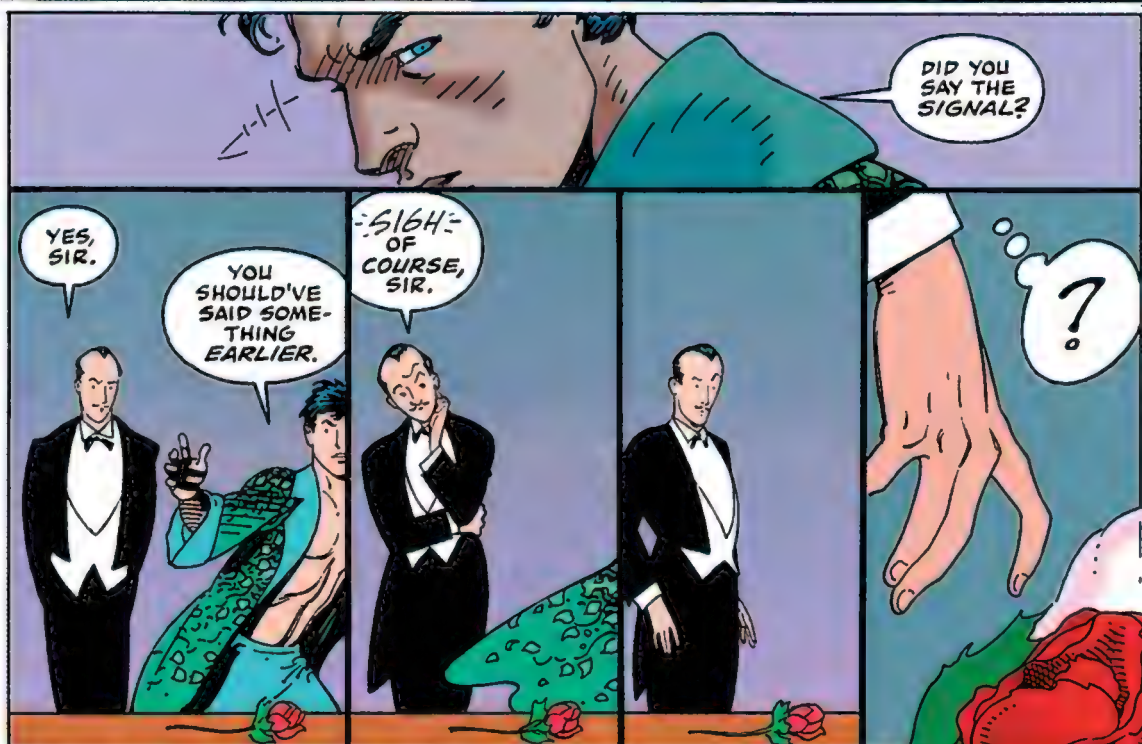
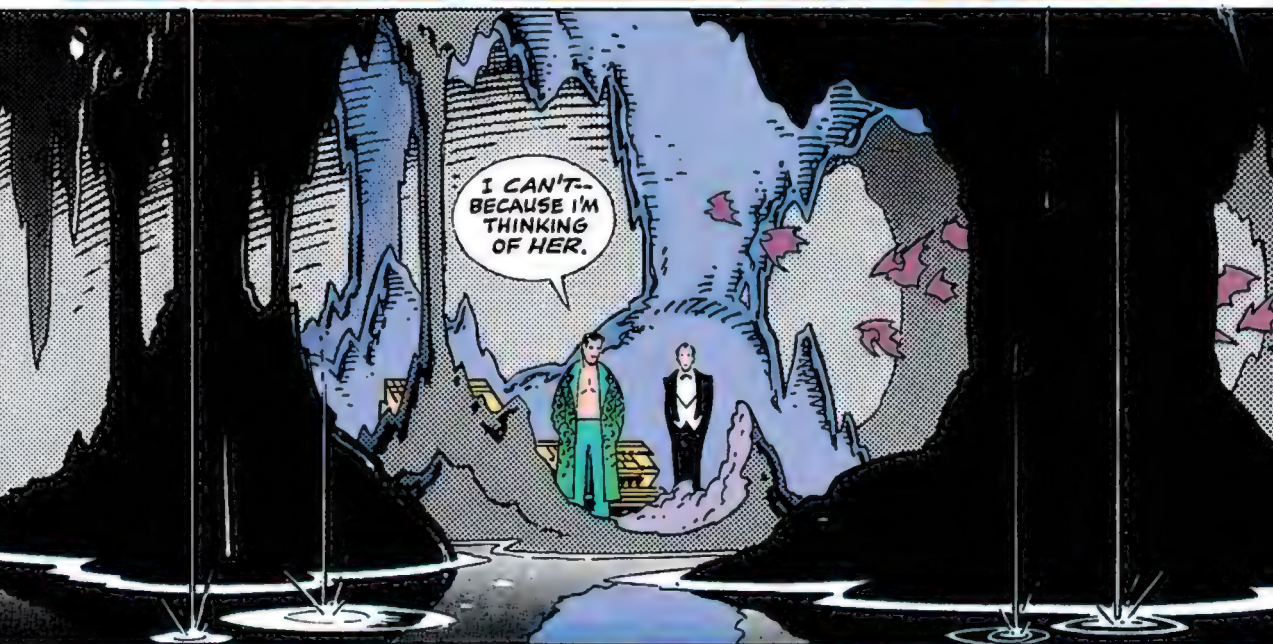
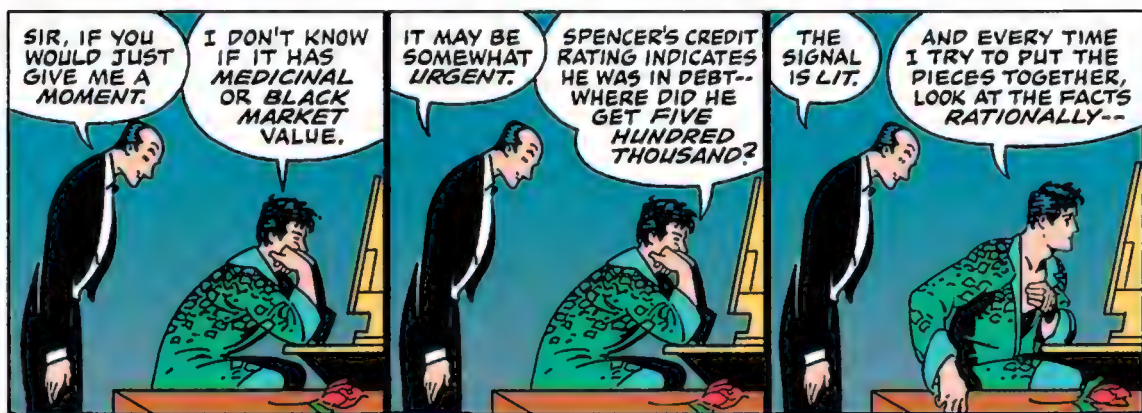
NOT NOW, ALFRED, I THINK I'VE FINALLY BROKEN DOWN THE FLUID I FOUND IN SPENCER'S APARTMENT.

BUT, SIR--

AN ALKALOID HALLUCINOGEN SIMILAR TO Mescaline, BUT WITH UNUSUAL DEVIATIONS.

IT DOESN'T CROSSCHECK AGAINST ANYTHING IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL TABLES.

I'M CERTAIN THIS SENT SPENCER OVER THE EDGE.



WHAT IS IT, CAPTAIN?

I HAD TO SEE YOU.

HOW DID YOU GET UP HERE?

I CONVINCED... ONE OF THE UNIFORMS DOWNSTAIRS TO LET ME UP.

STOP PLAYING GAMES. I KNOW ABOUT THE PSYCHEDELIC.

DID YOU DRUG SPENCER BEFORE--

NO! I SWEAR, I NEVER WANTED IAN DEAD.

"After I was RELEASED from the institute..."

"...I decided to continue the botanical research I began in Seattle before my... BREAKDOWN.

"Ian Spencer was the only one who believed in my REHABILITATION.

"He arranged for my grant and brought me to Gotham U.

"I suppose it was INEVITABLE--
I know it was UNPROFESSIONAL--

"But he had given me so
much-- a SECOND chance--

"We became INVOLVED.

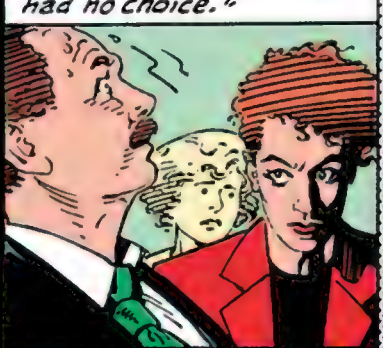
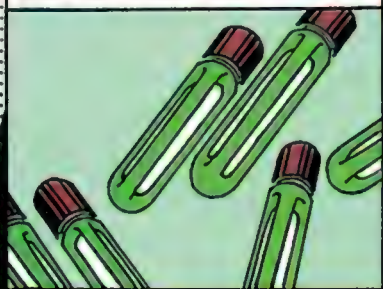
"It was WONDERFUL--until
I discovered EDENSFRING.



"The sad byproduct of a
hybridization experiment
between a desert CACTUS
and an amazon SUCCULENT.
I had developed a mind-
altering drug by accident
and Ian knew how to use it.

"I found out later he owed
money to criminals. He
offered them Edenspring
as payment.

"The woman, Dominique
Alioso, would market
Edenspring as a DESIGNER
DRUG. I went along. I
had no choice."



OH, GOD,
I THINK SHE
KILLED HIM.



I COULDN'T
GO TO THE
POLICE. THEY'D
SEND ME TO
JAIL THIS
TIME.



I'LL CHECK
OUT YOUR
STORY.



NO
PROMISES.



7

THE WAREHOUSE

Dominique Alioso, runs three galleries in Gotham, New York and London,

she partied in the fastlane with the RICH and JADED.

And walked away from TWO separate DRUG TRAFFICKING arrests.

ALIOSO FINE ART IMPORTS

She's smart. She's dealt exclusively with an upperclass clientele. The affluent offer less street risk and more discretion.

DAMMIT, VICTOR, I TOLD YOU NO.

I FOUND IT BLISSFUL. I WAS NAKED IN A RAIN-FOREST. EXTREMELY VIVID.

I DO NOT WANT YOU DEVELOPING A TASTE FOR OUR MERCHANDISE.

LET OUR CLIENTS USE IT. BUT NOT YOU. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

DON'T BE MAD, DOM. IT WAS JUST THIS ONCE.

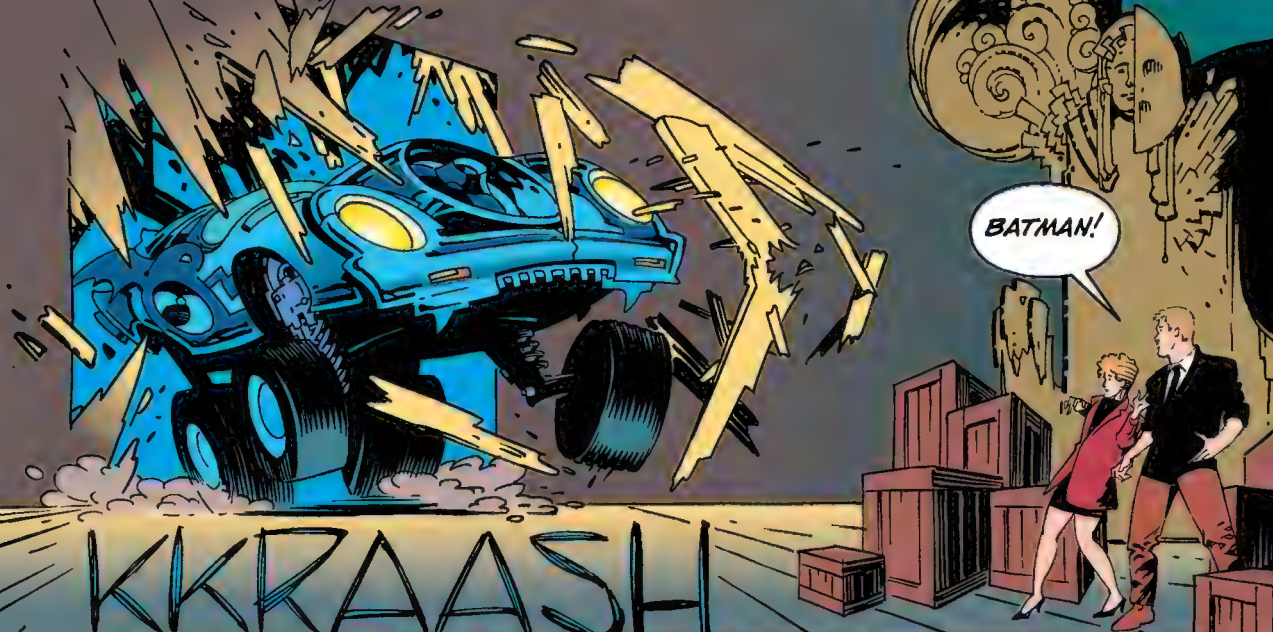
SO MANY PEOPLE EAGER FOR THE NEWEST THRILL. AND WE WILL MAKE A FORTUNE CATERING TO THEM.

AND IF IT TRICKLES DOWN TO STREET LEVEL, WE SEE MORE PROFIT.

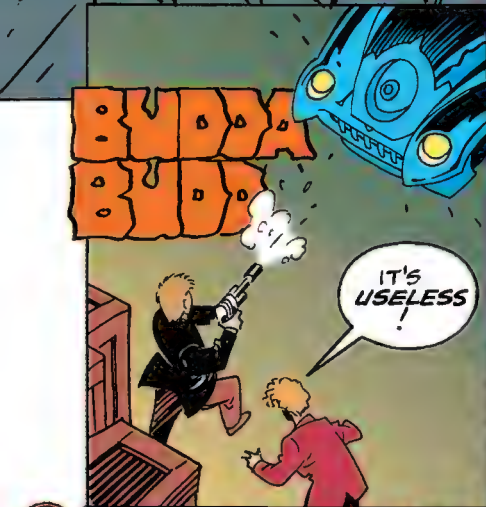
HOW FORTUNATE SPENCER WAS WILLING TO BARGAIN WITH EDEN-SPRING. AND HOW FORTUNATE HE'S DEAD. HE WAS BEGINNING TO BORE ME.

WHAT THE HELL?

RRUMBL

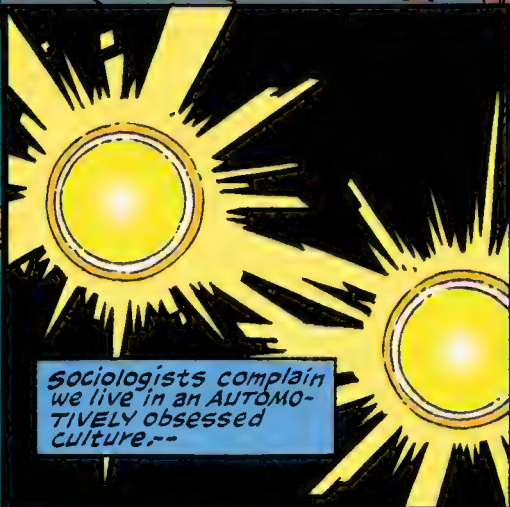


BATMAN!



LET'S
GET OUT
OF HERE!

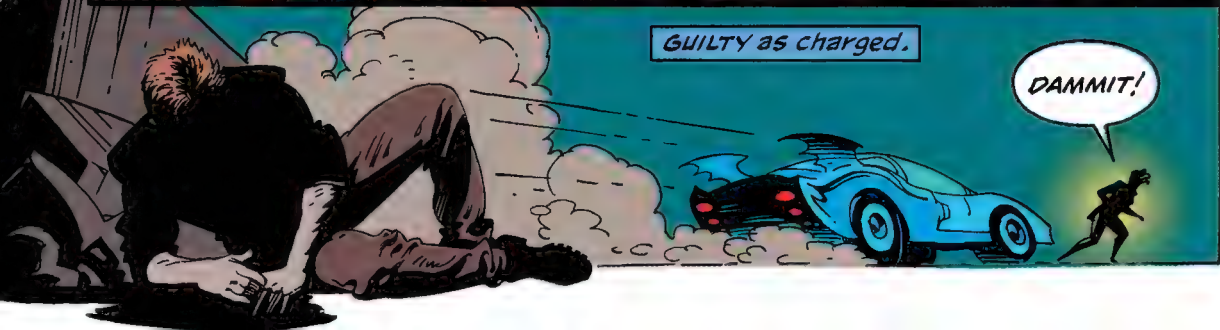
IT'S
USELESS



Sociologists complain
we live in an AUTOMOTIVELY
obsessed
culture.--



-- That a man reveals his
character by his car.



GUILTY as charged.

DAMMIT!

The car was the best money, could buy, utilizing top engineers and designers...

But I did my OWN modifications. Took time to work out the bugs. But my favorite option speaks for itself--

"STOP!"

--VOICE-ACTIVATED REMOTE CONTROL!

LET'S TALK ABOUT IAN SPENCER.

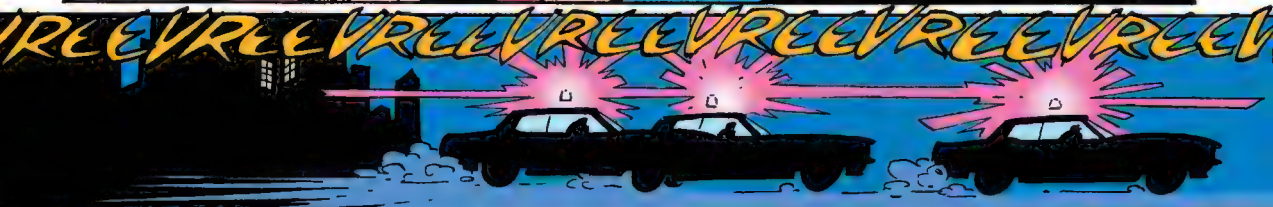
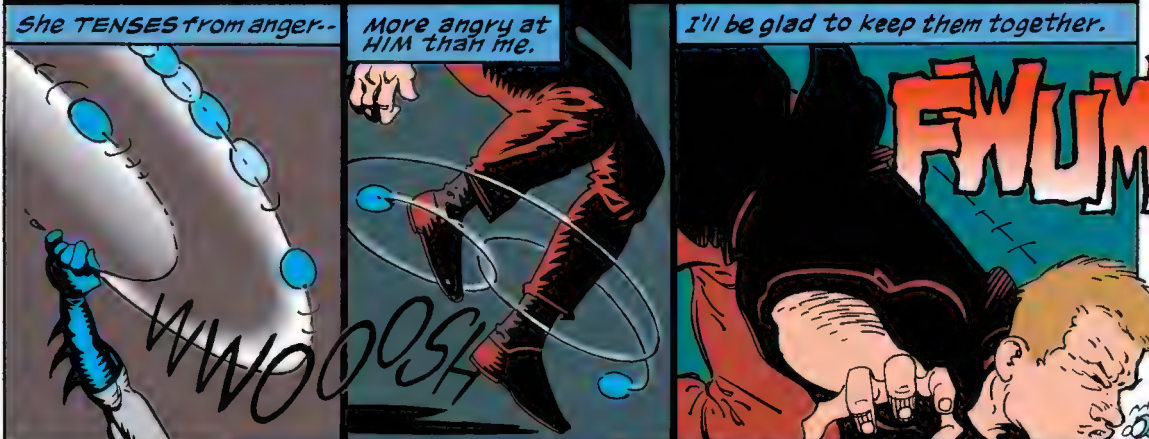
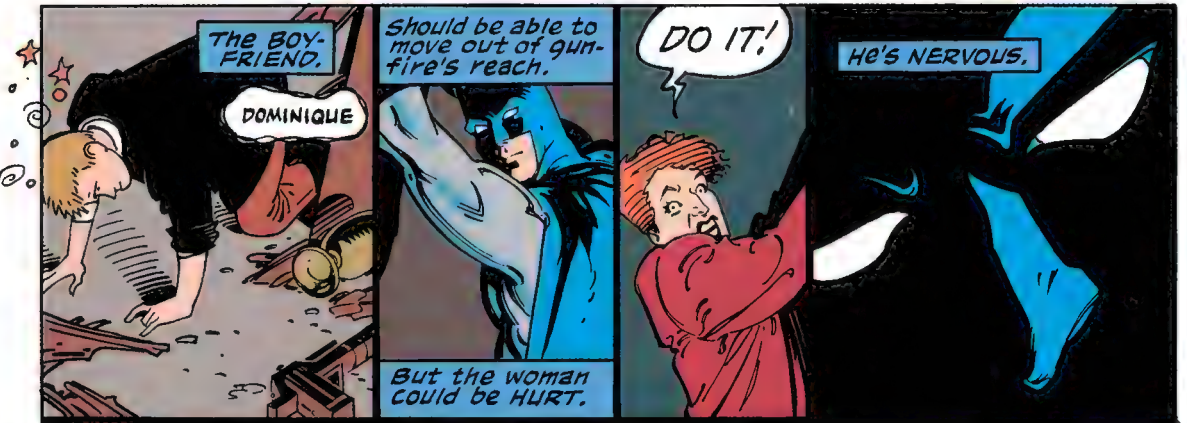
HE WAS A SMUG ACADEMIC WITH AN EXPENSIVE LIFE STYLE --HE GOT IN WAY OVER HIS HEAD.

HE PANICKED, OVER-DOSED, AND SWAN-DIVED-- STRAIGHT TO HELL!

WHICH IS WHERE YOU CAN GO!!!

YOU CAN TALK TO ME OR THE POLICE. EITHER WAY, YOU'RE THROUGH!

VICTOR! KILL HIM!



The police arrive to clean up after me. I should feel a sense of COMPLETION.
But I DON'T.

YOU KNOW WHO THIS IS?
DOMINIQUE AND VICTOR ARE IN JAIL FOR SPENCER'S MURDER.

YOUR TESTIMONY WILL HELP THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S CASE.

PAMELA, I BELIEVE YOU.

CLICK

STUPID. Why did I call her from Lanois's?

Did I really want to hear the sound of her voice THAT much?

Get hold of yourself.

EVERYTHING OKAY, BRUCE? YOU'VE BEEN PREOCCUPIED ALL EVENING.

EVERYTHING'S FINE. JUST SOME BUSINESS. CAN'T GET AWAY FROM IT.

ANYWAY, PAMELA-- I'M COMPLETELY YOURS FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT.

YOU SON OF A--

HUH?

THAT'S THE THIRD TIME YOU'VE CALLED ME PAMELA TONIGHT!

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE, I DON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THIS.

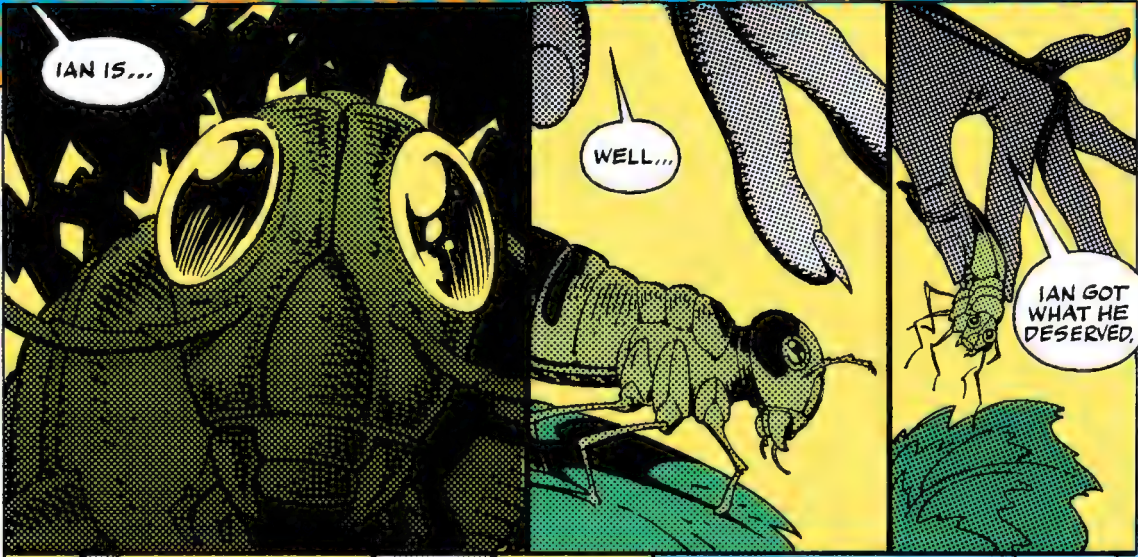
What's happening to me?

"WHY CAN'T I GET HER OUT OF MY MIND?"

9

THE GREENHOUSE

EVERYTHING'S
WONDERFUL,
DARLINGS.
DOMINIQUE
AND VICTOR
ARE BEHIND
BARS.



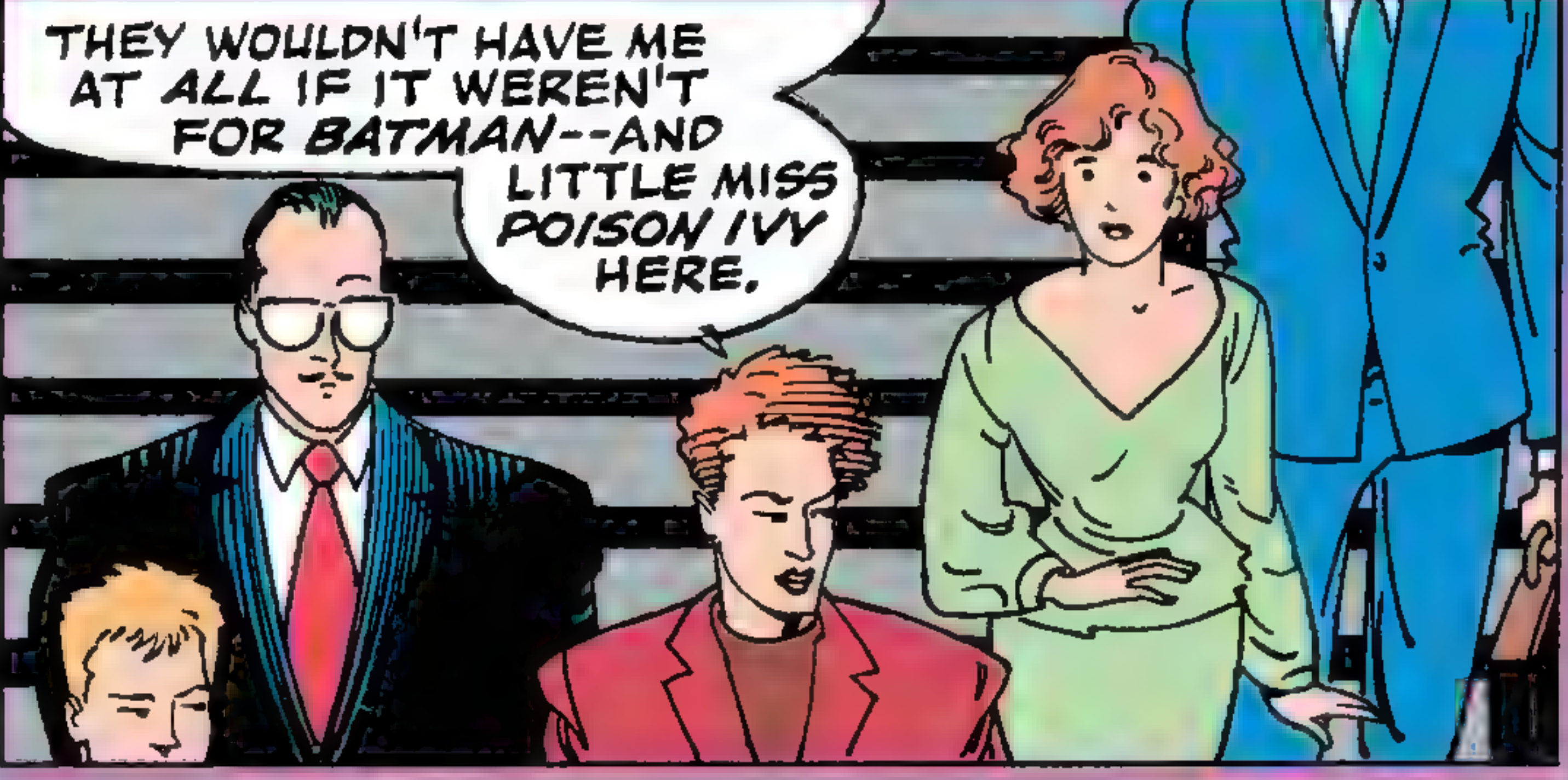
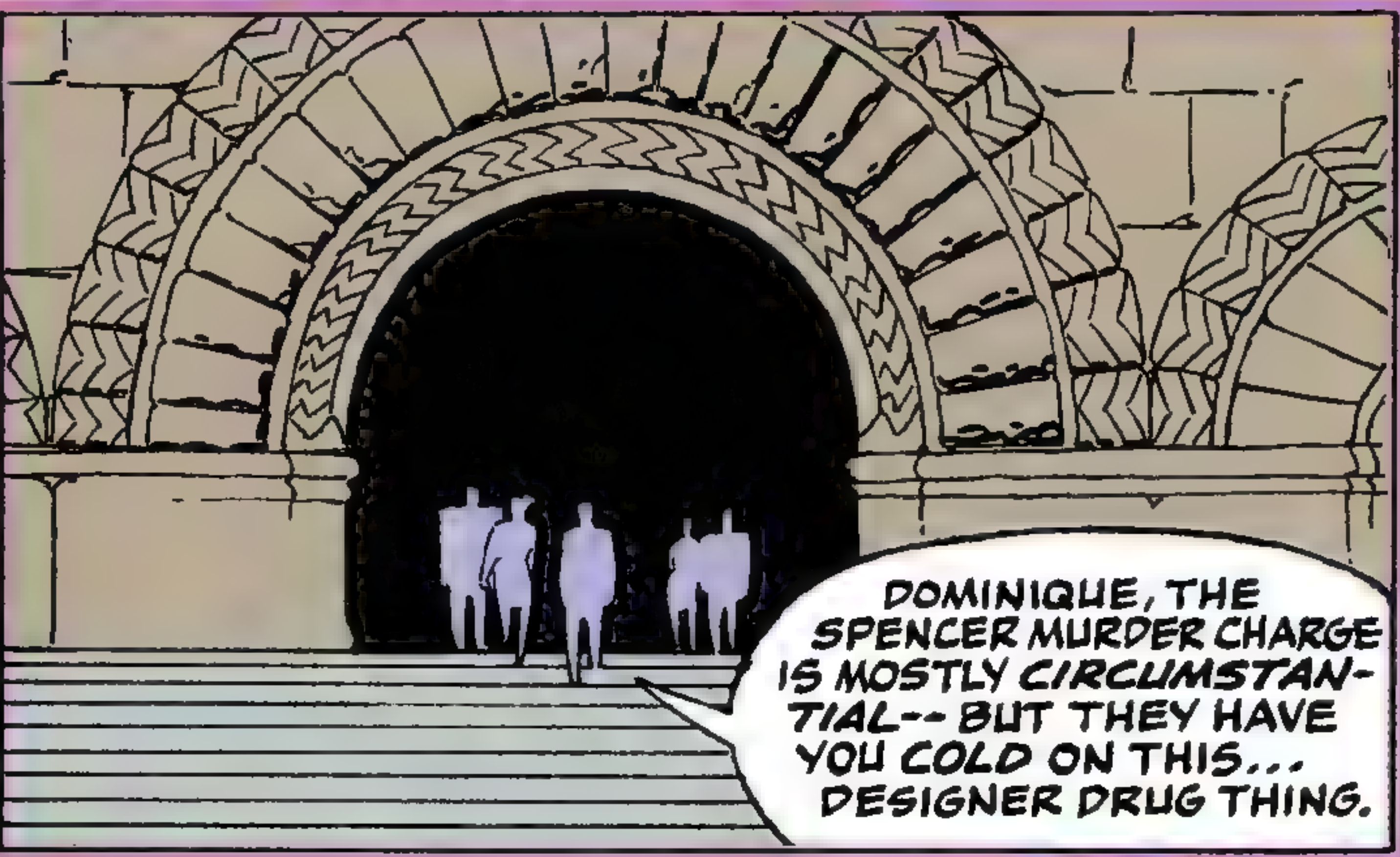
TO BE CONCLUDED →

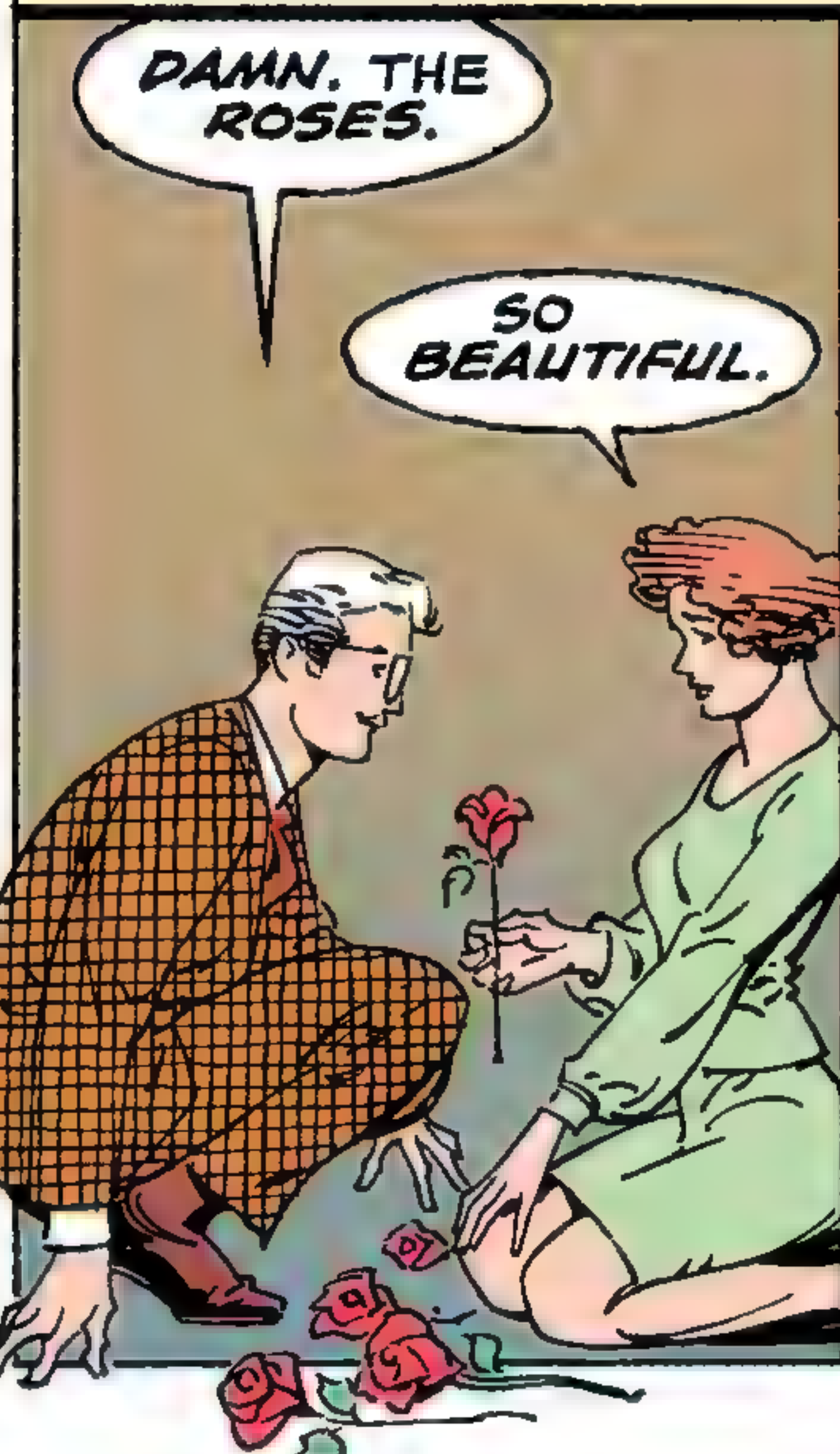
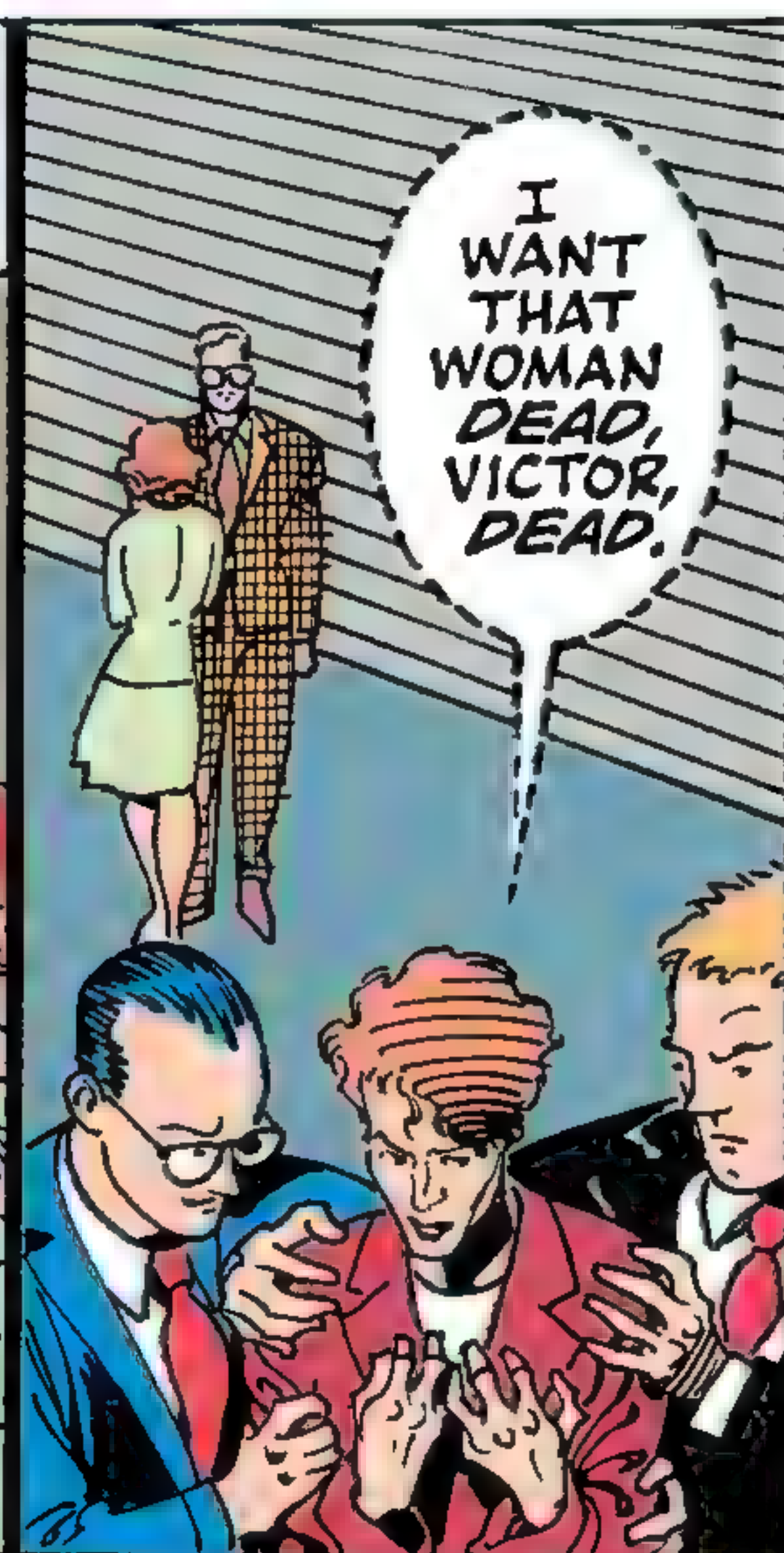
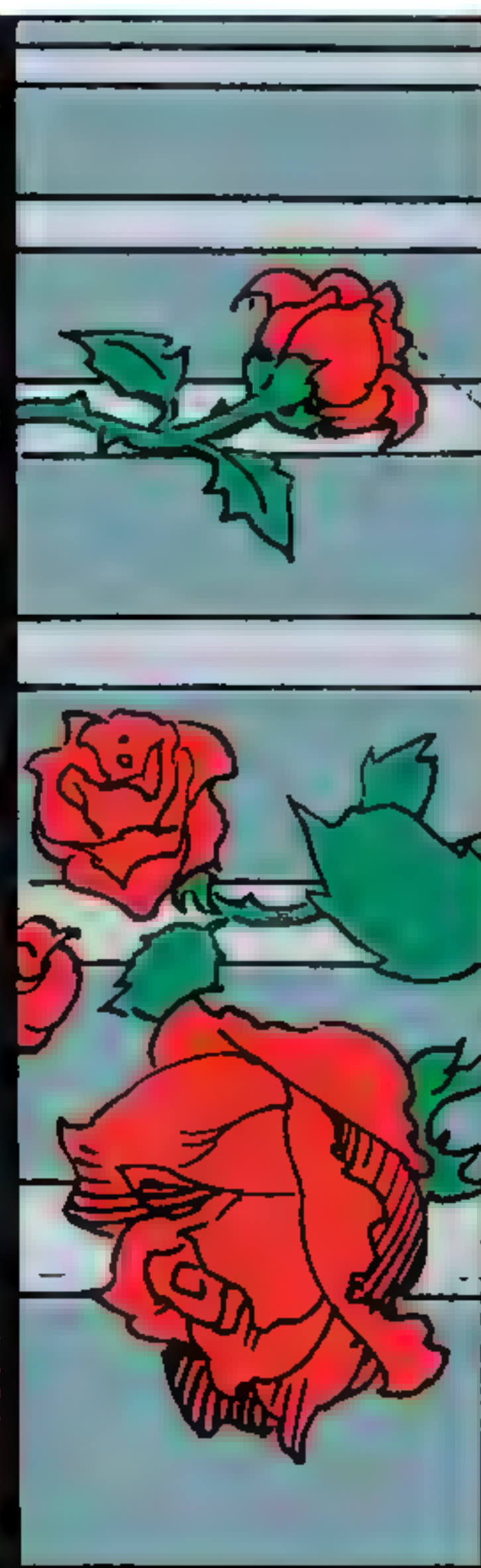
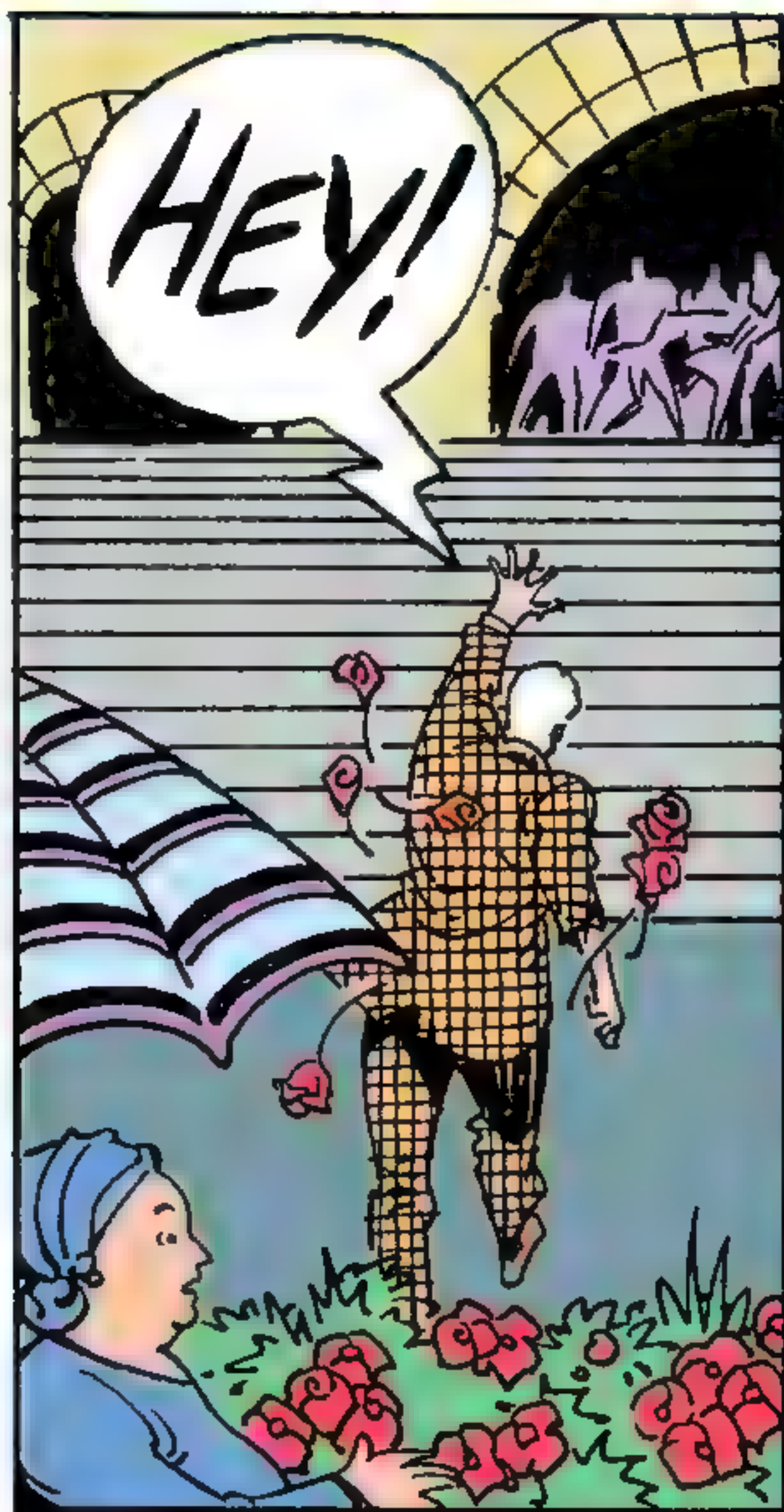
10

THE COURTHOUSE

"...ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE DOOR,
THE GREEN PLANT GROWETH, MENACING
THERE IS ALWAYS A FORGOTTEN
THING, AND LOVE IS NOT
SECURE."
--G.K. CHESTERTON

HALF A
MILLION?
THAT'S NOT
BAIL--THAT'S
EXTORTION.





-- she's ALL I can think of--

--making my CONTINUED interest
in the Spencer homicide--less
about justice than HER.

THE D.A.
DROPPED
THE MURDER
CHARGES
AGAINST
DOMINIQUE
ALIOSO
AND VICTOR
CHU.
ISLEY'S
TESTIMONY
ISN'T
ENOUGH
TO CONVICT
THEM.

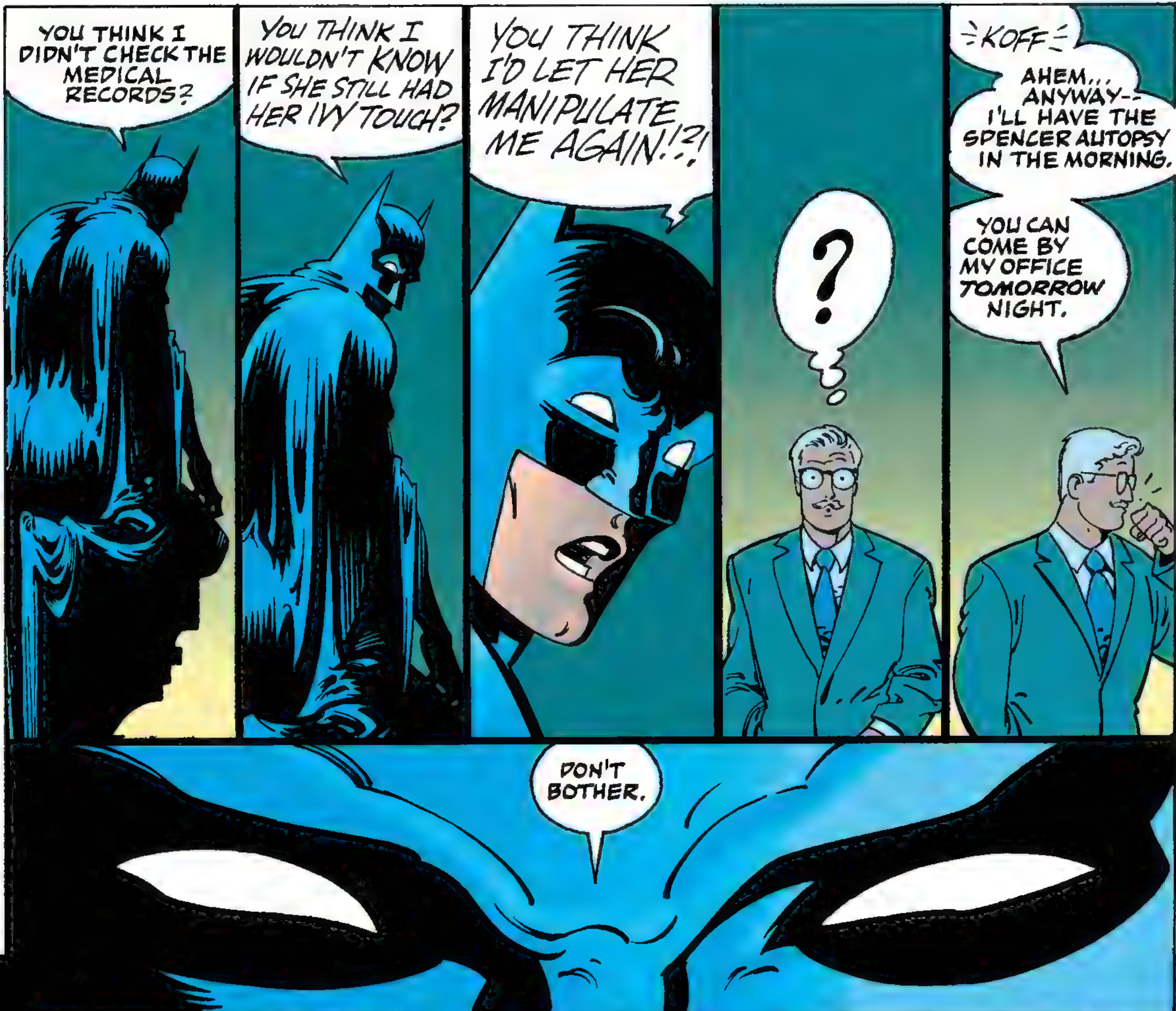
I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE
SPENCER DID JUST OVER-
DOSE ON EDENSPRING--
--MAYBE HE ACQUIRED
A TASTE FOR THE DRUG
HE FORCED ISLEY
TO CREATE.

ONCE
DOMINIQUE
HAD PAMELA
TO MANUFAC-
TURE EDEN-
SPRING--

--SHE
DIDN'T
NEED
SPENCER
ANY-
MORE,

MOTIVE ALONE
IS NO GOOD
IN COURT. Y'KNOW,
TODAY'S MY
ANNIVERSARY.
I BOUGHT ROSES
FOR BARBARA...
BUT WHEN
ISLEY TOUCHED
ME--I COULDN'T
REMEMBER MY
WIFE'S NAME.

YOU
SURE HER
POISON IVY
DAYS ARE
THROUGH
?



YOU THINK I DIDN'T CHECK THE MEDICAL RECORDS?

YOU THINK I WOULDN'T KNOW IF SHE STILL HAD HER IVY TOUCH?

YOU THINK I'D LET HER MANIPULATE ME AGAIN!?!?

?

≡KOFF≡
AHEM... ANYWAY-- I'LL HAVE THE SPENCER AUTOPSY IN THE MORNING.

YOU CAN COME BY MY OFFICE TOMORROW NIGHT.

DON'T BOTHER.

I'LL GET IT MYSELF.

Shouldn't have snapped--but Gordon's WRONG about Pamela--

She's the VICTIM, SEDUCED by Spencer, STRONGARMED by Dominique--

If the D.A. CAN'T prove Dominique POISONED Spencer--

--I will.

--but, SLOWLY, from the KNOT in my stomach--

-- I begin to feel I'm playing the FOOL.

I HEAR DOMINIQUE AND VICTOR ARE WALKING ON THE MURDER RAP. YOU WORRIED?

NO!

DOESN'T MATTER. COPS'LL BE WATCHIN' HER 'ROUND THE CLOCK.

BESIDES... NOW YOU GOT EVAN SACKS PROTECTING YOUR BEST INTERESTS--

--YOUR LUCKY DAY, BABY--

PLEASE, LET'S STICK TO BUSINESS...

OKAY OKAY! EVER SINCE DOMINIQUE GOT POPPED, ALL MY CLIENTS WANT IS EDENSPRING.

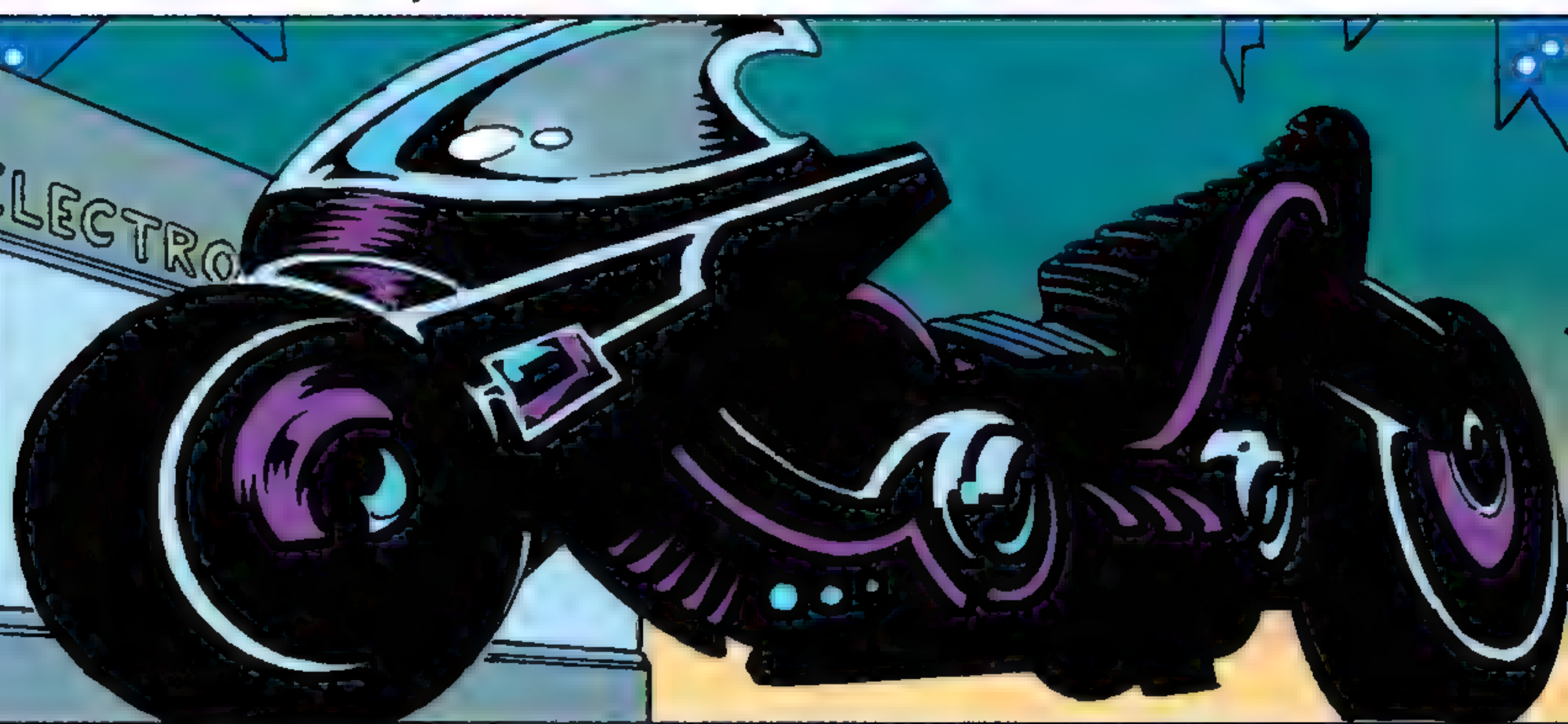
YOU HAVE THE SUPPLY. I HAVE THE DEMAND.

TRUST ME, BABY, I CAN GIVE YOU THE BEST OF--

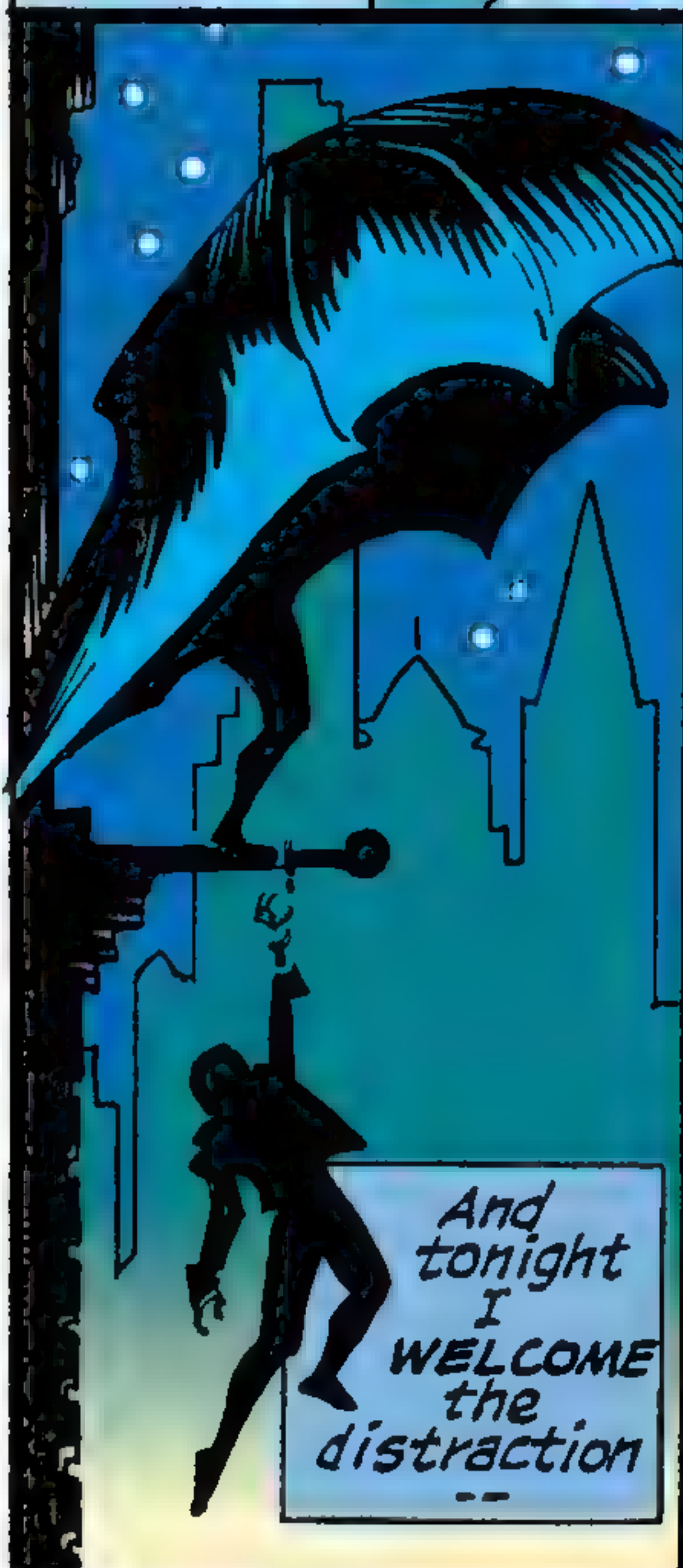
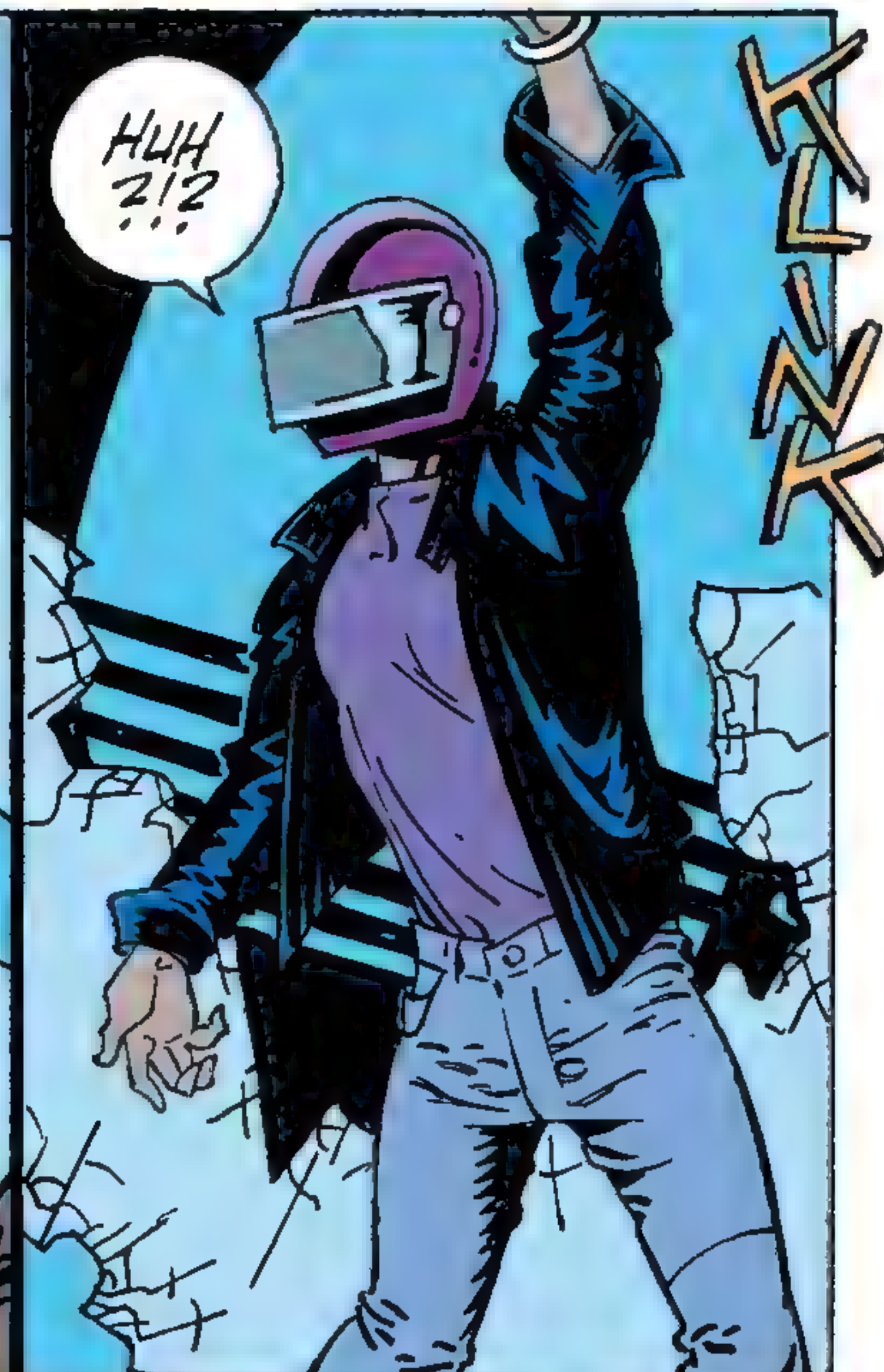
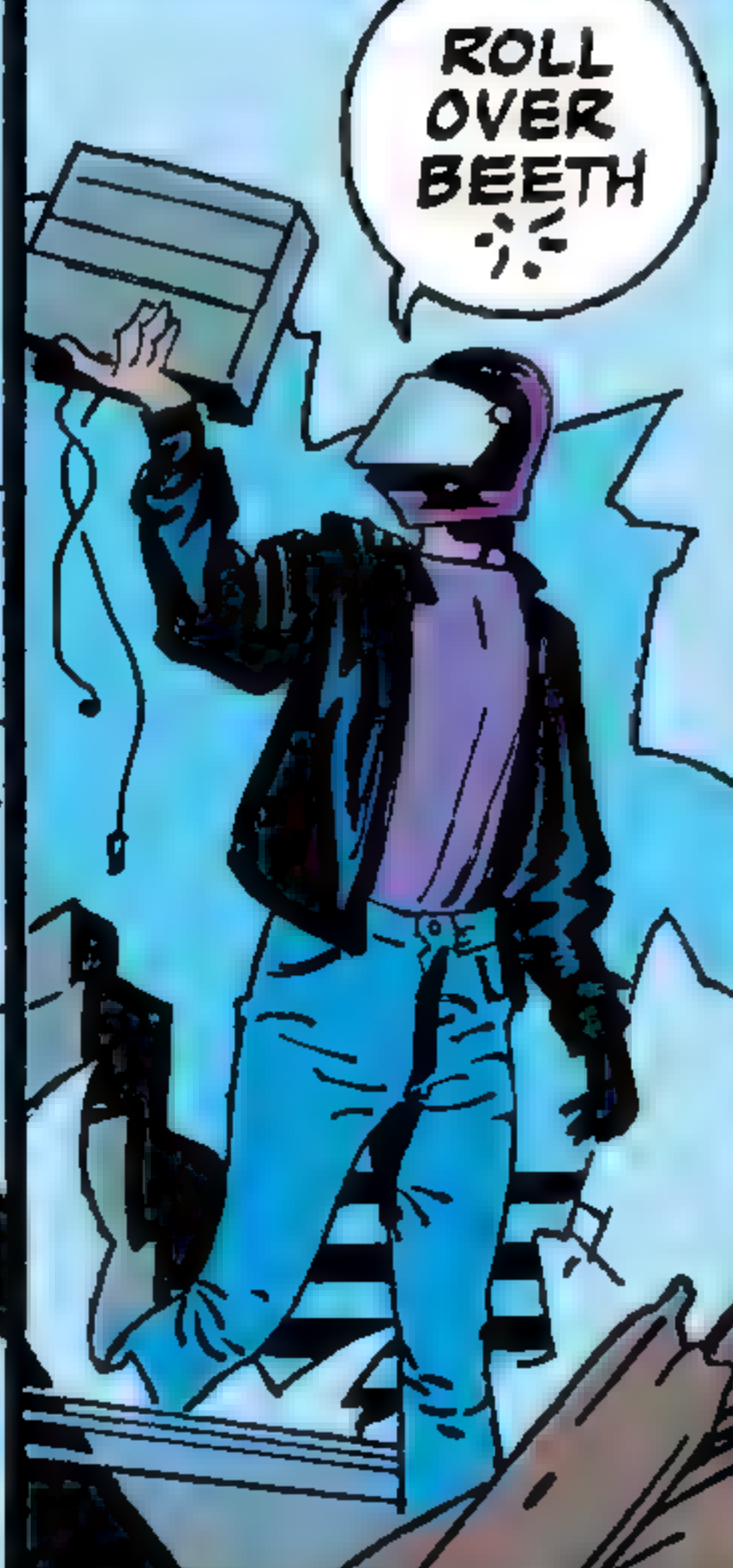
THE ONLY THING I WANT FROM YOU IS PAYMENT...

AND LET'S GET ONE THING CLEAR-- I'M NOBODY'S "BABY!"

Can't seem to clear my head of the STATIC-- until I hear the ALARM.



KLIN



FS



MY
BIKE
!!!



I try
to AVOID
property
damage--



-- I just like to
FINISH these things--



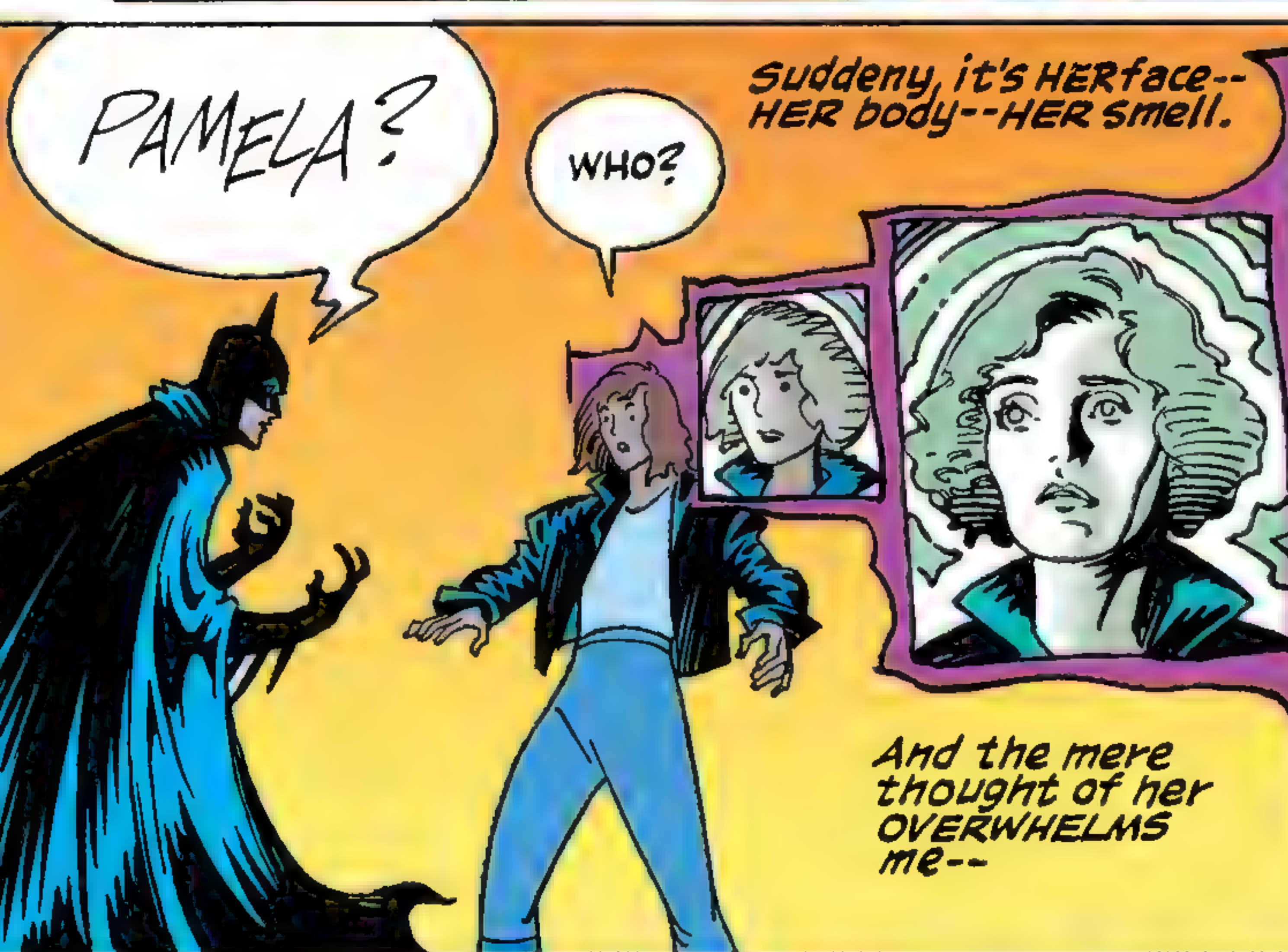
QUICKLY.



OKAY,
I GIVE
--
I GIVE

A GIRL?
And she
looks like
--

UNNFF



PAMELA?

WHO?

Suddeny, it's HER face--
HER body--HER smell.

And the mere
thought of her
OVERWHELMS
me--



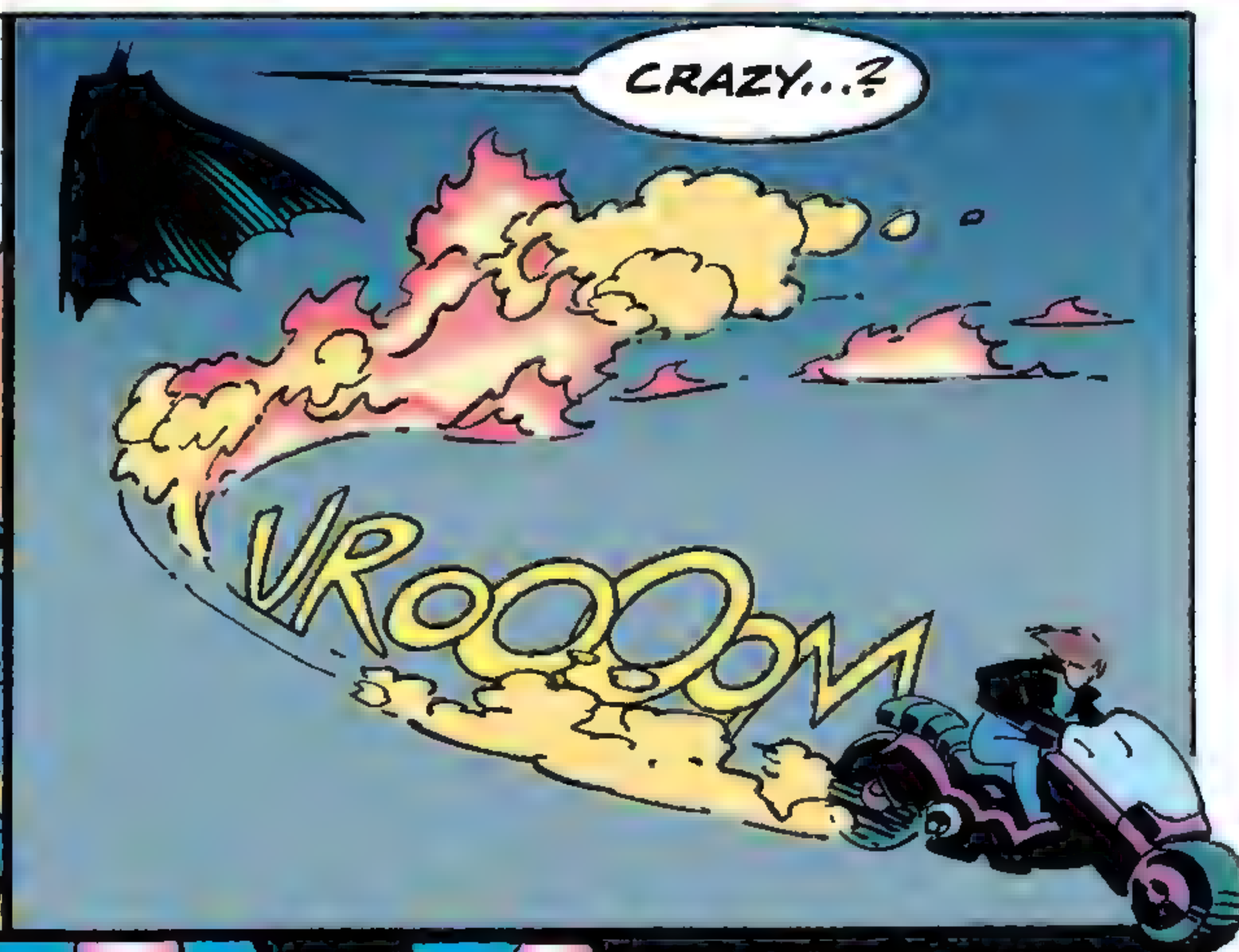
-- ASSAULTS me--



--IMMOBILIZES me--



MAN,
YOU
MUST
BE
CRAZY.

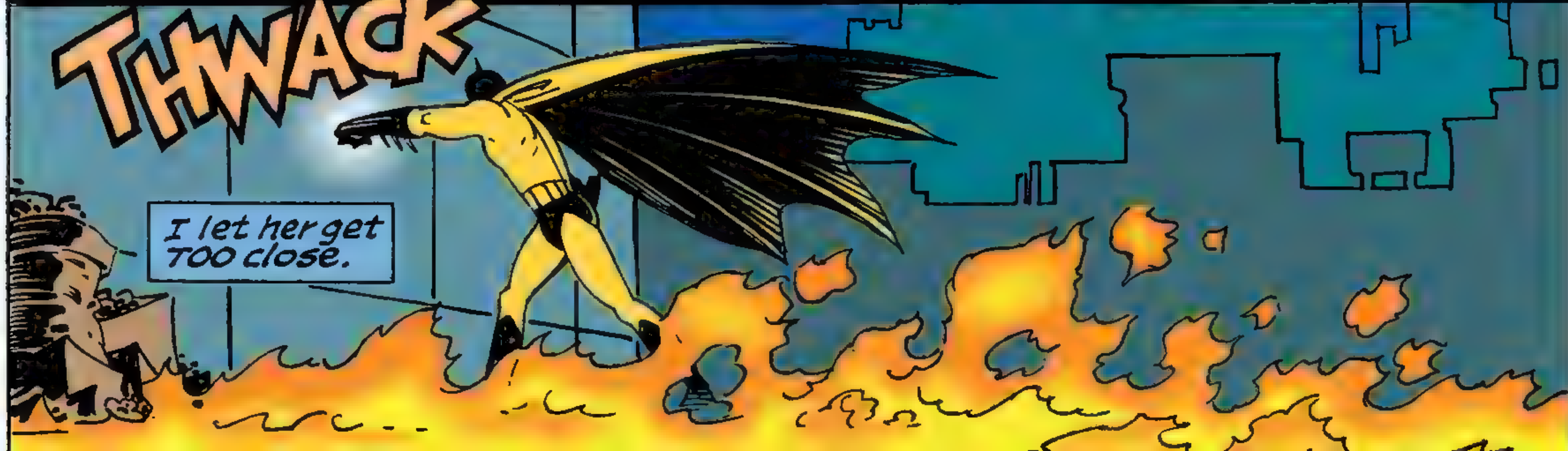


CRAZY...?

VROOOON



Gordon
WAS RIGHT.



THWACK

I let her get
TOO close.

BLAMING
MS. ISLEY FOR
YOUR LACK OF
FOCUS THIS
EVENING--

-- DOESN'T THAT
SEEM SOMEWHAT
EXTREME?

THERE ARE
PSYCHEDELIC
TRACE ELEMENTS
IN MY BLOOD--

THAT'S HOW SHE
WORKS, ALFRED--
HER TOUCH IS LIKE
A VIRUS--

-- SHE
LITERALLY
GETS UNDER
YOUR SKIN.

SOME
WOMEN
DO, SIR.

NOT FUNNY.
PAMELA CONVINCED
ME THAT DOMINIQUE
KILLED SPENCER--

-- AND I TOOK
THE BAIT, HOOK,
LINE, AND
SINKER--

-- FOOLISHLY
THINKING SHE
WAS NO
THREAT.

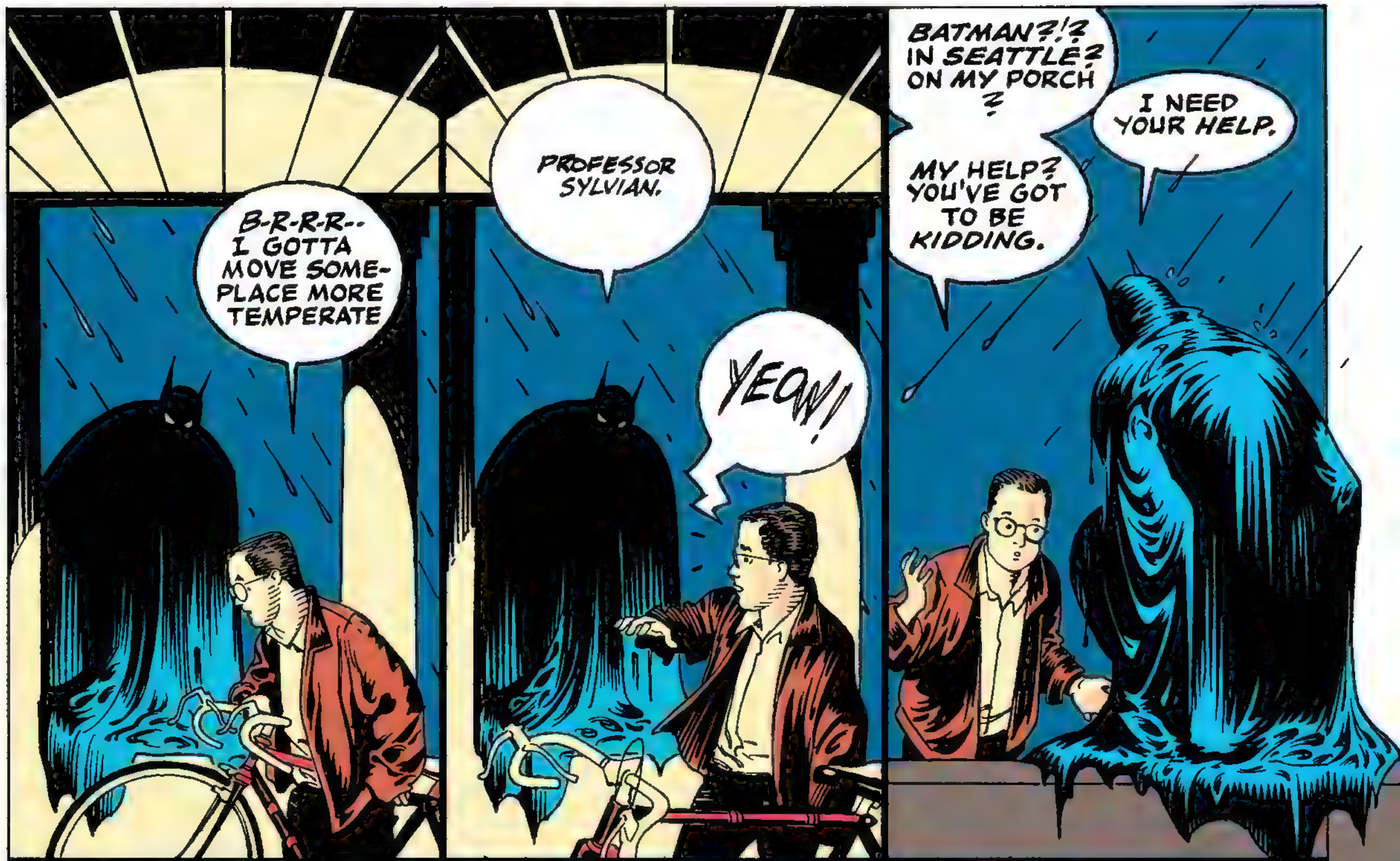
PERHAPS YOU
SHOULD CONSIDER THE
TYPE OF WOMEN YOUR
COSTUME ATTRACTS.

THEN REMIND
ME TO GO INTO
THERAPY LATER.
RIGHT NOW--
I'VE GOT TO FIND
A WAY TO DEAL
WITH PAMELA
ON MY TERMS--

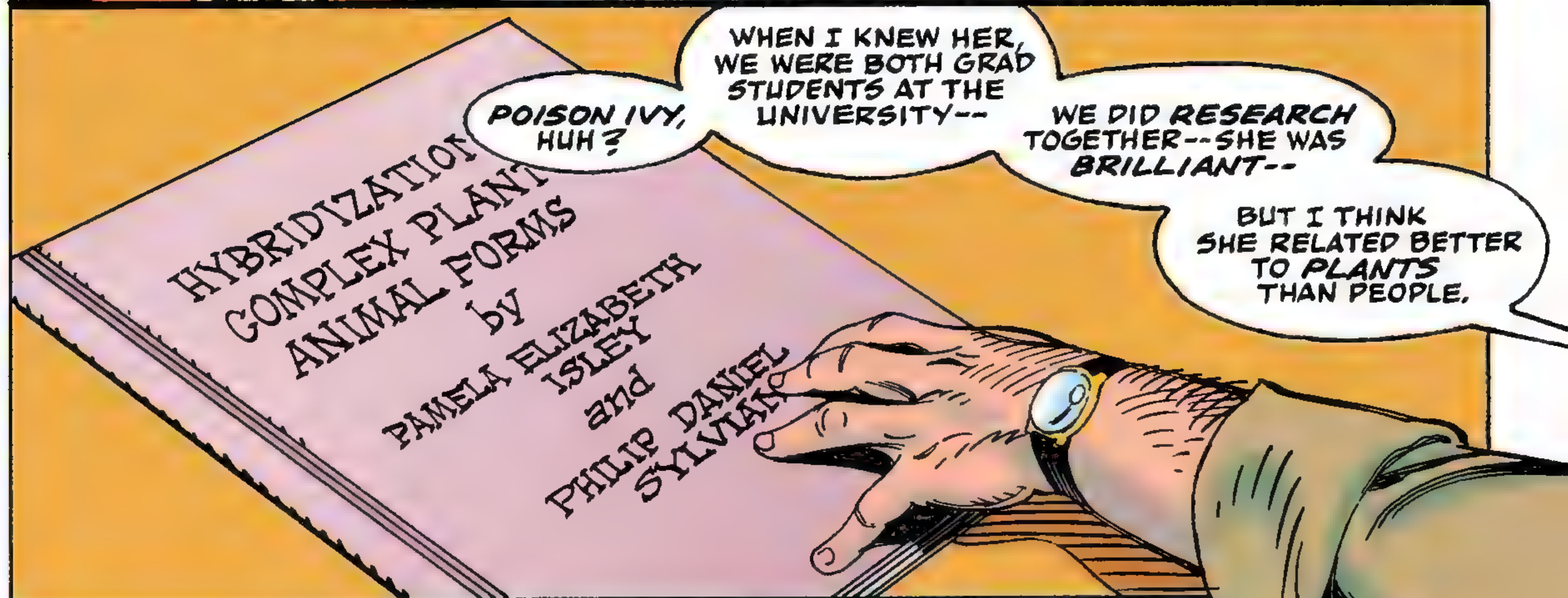
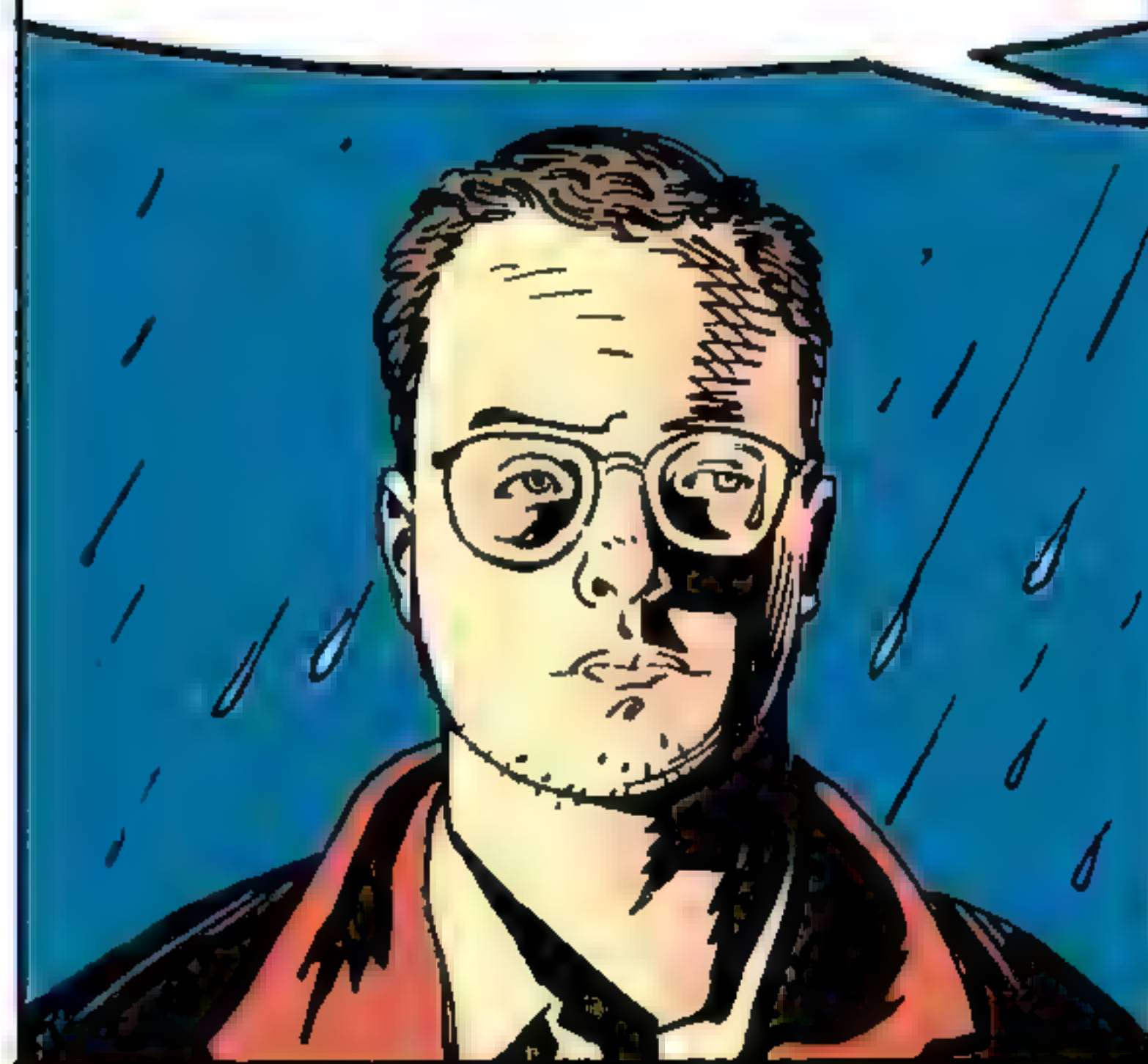
BEFORE
SOME-
ONE
ELSE
DIES.

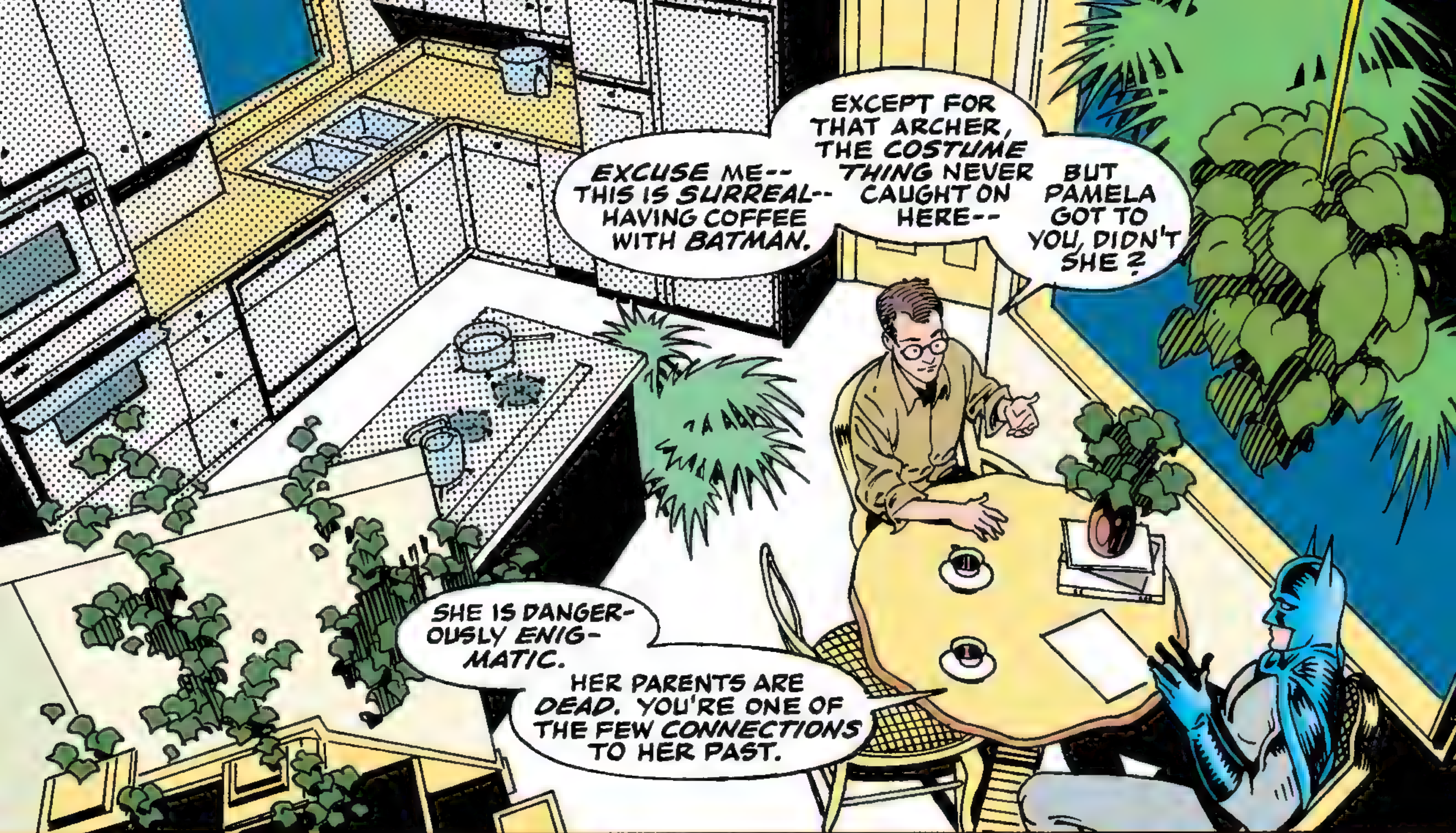
CALL
THE AIR-
PORT--

--I'M
GOING TO
SEATTLE
!



IT CONCERNS PAMELA ISLEY.





EXCUSE ME--
THIS IS SURREAL--
HAVING COFFEE
WITH BATMAN.

EXCEPT FOR
THAT ARCHER,
THE COSTUME
THING NEVER
CAUGHT ON
HERE--

BUT
PAMELA
GOT TO
YOU, DIDN'T
SHE?

SHE IS DANGER-
OUSLY ENIG-
MATIC.

HER PARENTS ARE
DEAD. YOU'RE ONE OF
THE FEW CONNECTIONS
TO HER PAST.

"NOBODY COULD FIGURE PAMELA
OUT -- A SMART WOMAN DRAWN
TO ABUSIVE MEN--

"SHE BECAME INVOLVED WITH A
PROFESSOR-- JASON WOODRUE--
CRUEL, COLD, AND CONDES-
CENDING.

"WOODRUE WAS CONDUCTING
MACABRE EXPERIMENTS
IN HYBRIDIZATION--



"TORMENTING MATURE ANIMALS WITH GENETIC
RESTRUCTURING... KILLING THE LUCKY FEW.
HE CONVINCED PAMELA TO BECOME A TEST SUB-
JECT. SHE COULDN'T SAY NO. HE ALMOST KILLED
HER-- PUT HER IN THE HOSPITAL FOR SIX MONTHS--

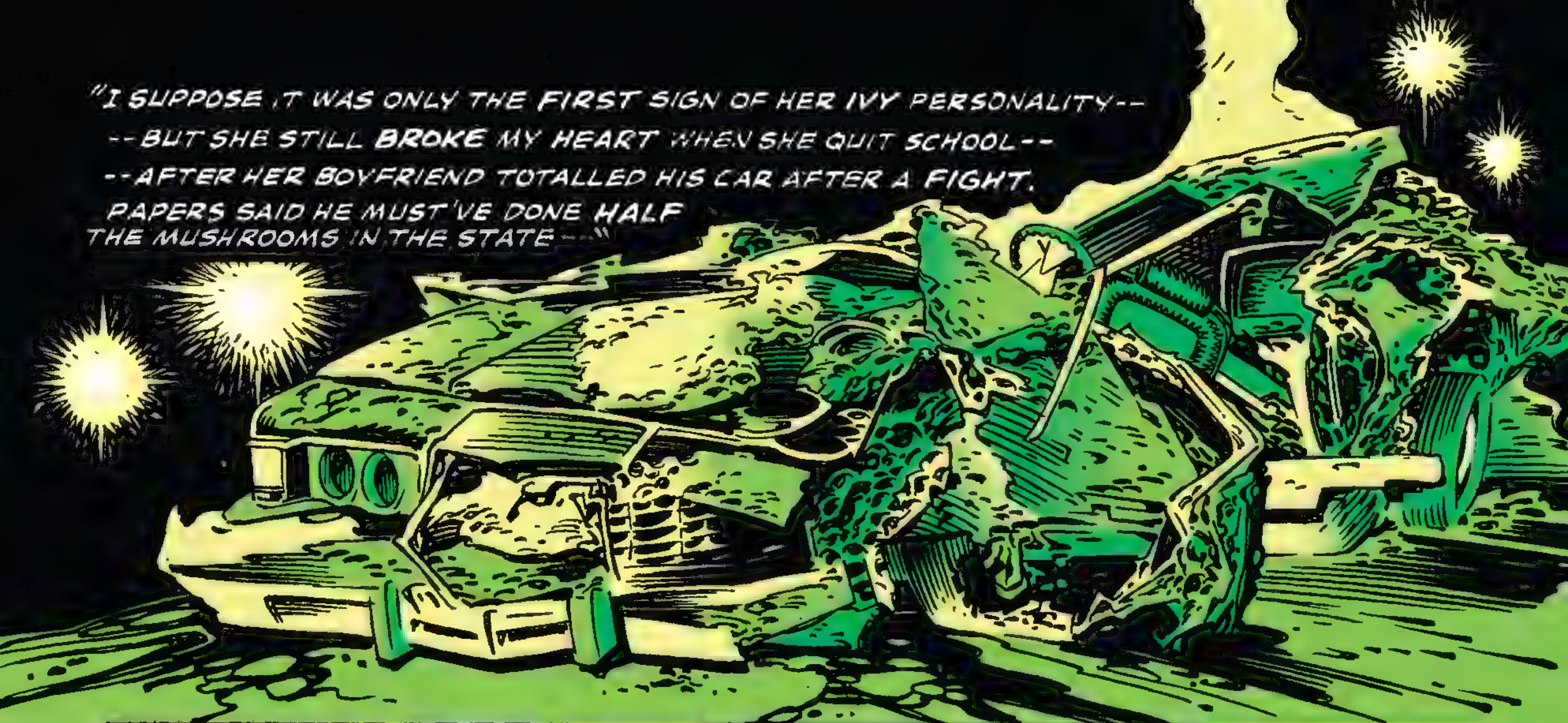
"WHEN PAMELA CAME BACK TO SCHOOL,
WOODRUE HAD LEFT FOR THE EAST
COAST -- AND SHE'D BECOME EMOTION-
ALLY VOLATILE-- ONE MOMENT SWEET,
THE NEXT DESTRUCTIVE-- BUT SUDDENLY
THERE WAS SOMETHING IRRESISTIBLE
ABOUT HER--



I THOUGHT I WAS IN LOVE WITH HER--
CAN YOU IMAGINE?



"I SUPPOSE IT WAS ONLY THE FIRST SIGN OF HER IVY PERSONALITY--
--BUT SHE STILL BROKE MY HEART WHEN SHE QUIT SCHOOL--
--AFTER HER BOYFRIEND TOTALLED HIS CAR AFTER A FIGHT.
PAPERS SAID HE MUST'VE DONE HALF
THE MUSHROOMS IN THE STATE--"



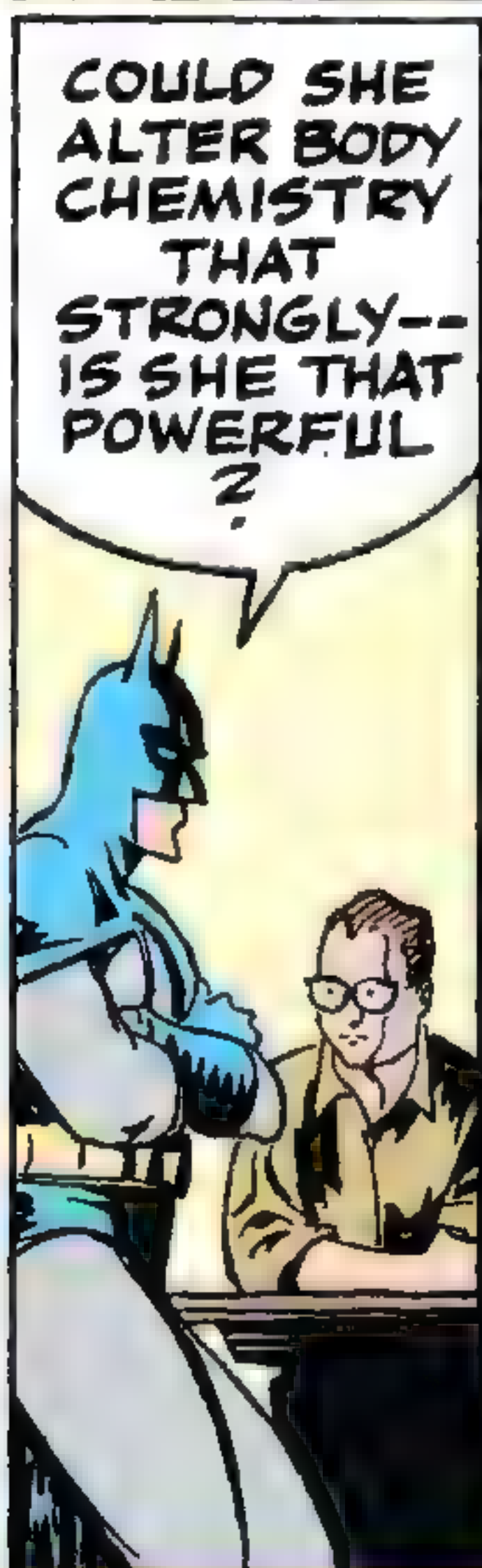
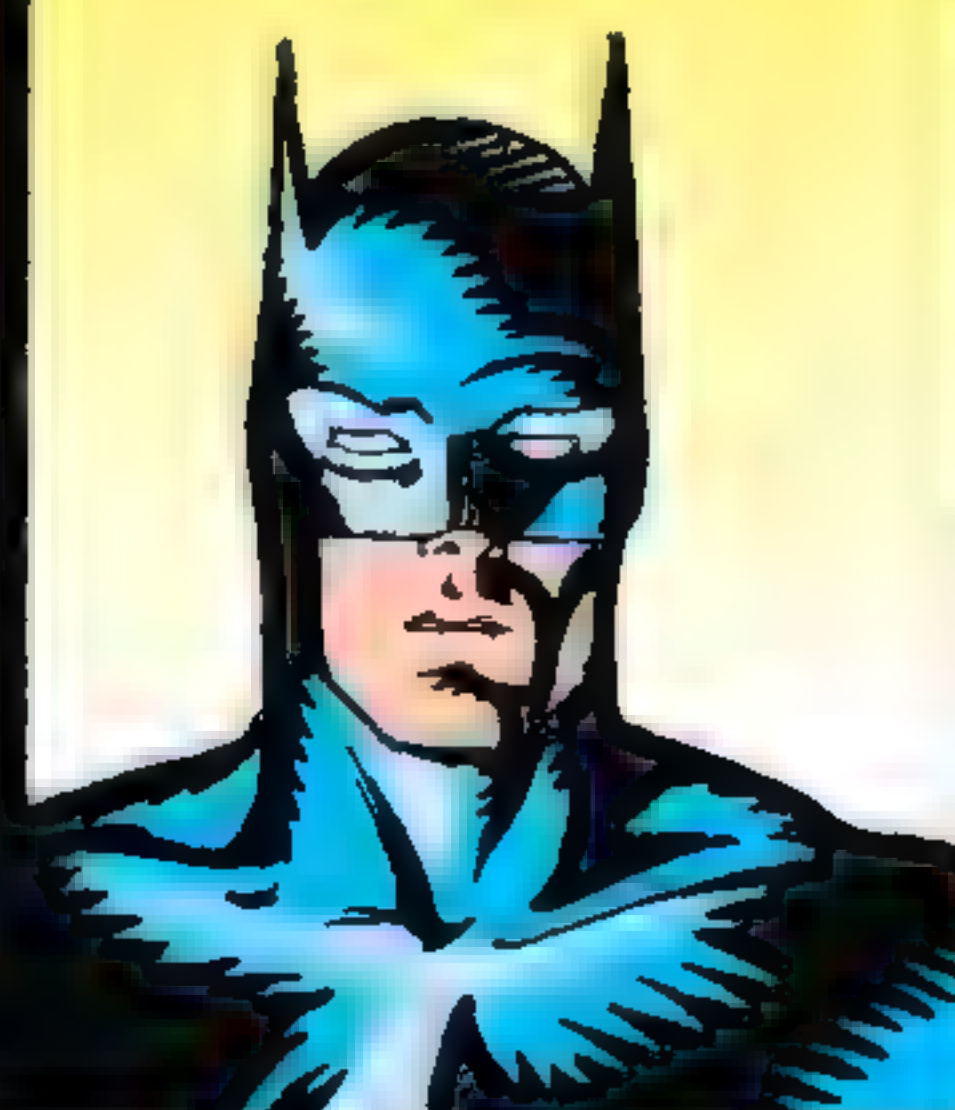
HE
LOST
CONTROL
WHILE
SUFFERING
A MASSIVE
FUNGAL
OVERDOSE.



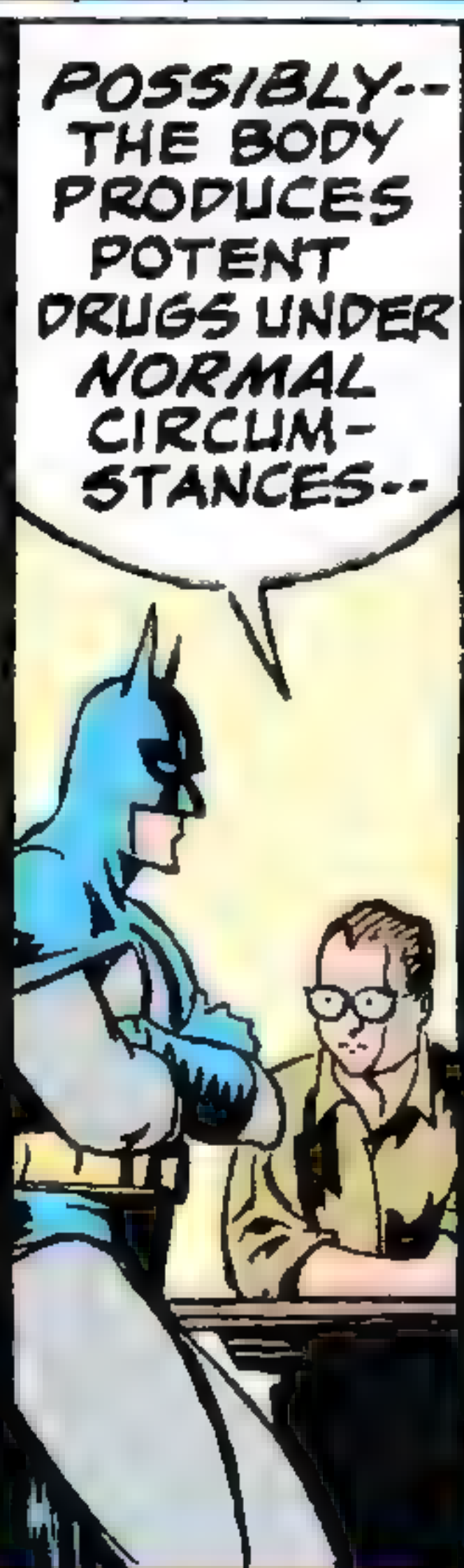
JUST LIKE...



I
ASSUMED
IT WAS EDEN-
SPRING-- BUT
IT WAS
PAMELA--



COULD SHE
ALTER BODY
CHEMISTRY
THAT
STRONGLY--
IS SHE THAT
POWERFUL
?



POSSIBLY--
THE BODY
PRODUCES
POTENT
DRUGS UNDER
NORMAL
CIRCUM-
STANCES--



GIVEN HER
TRANSITIVE
ABILITIES--
SHE COULD
TURN A MAN
INSIDE
OUT.



THEN HOW
DO I
COUNTER-
ACT HER
TOUCH
?



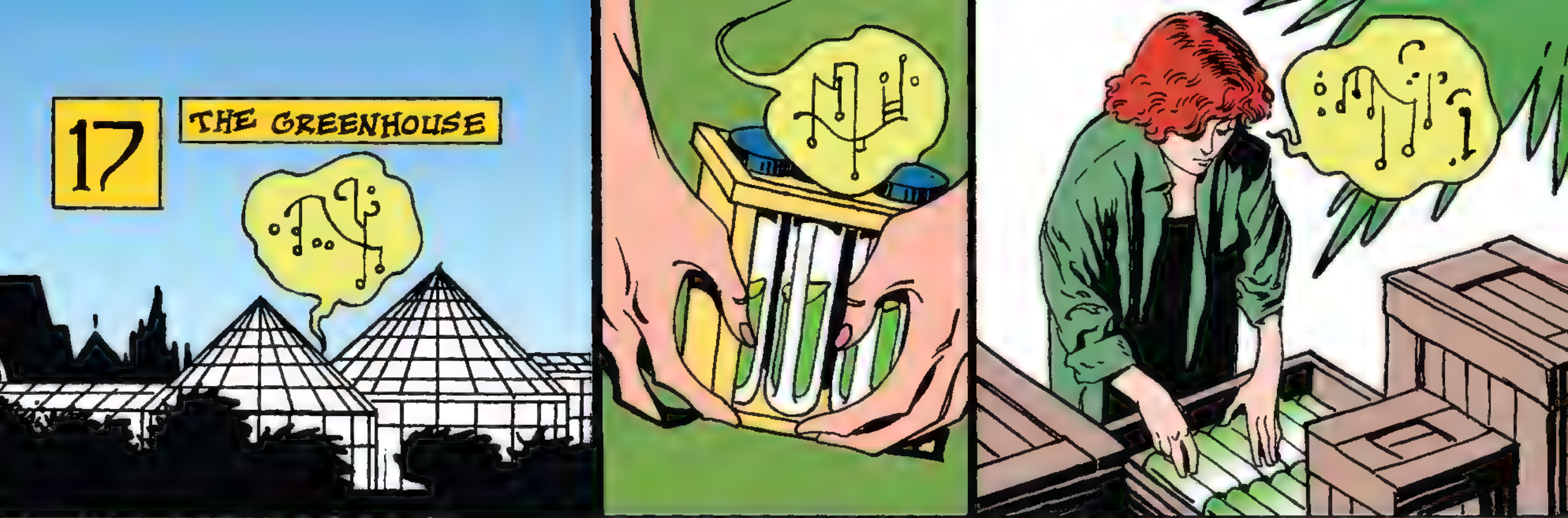
HMMM-- YOU NEED TO STOP HER
CHEMICAL ASSAULT FROM MAKING
CONTACT... SOMETHING LIKE THE
GEL STUNTMEN USE FOR FIRE
EFFECTS MIGHT WORK--

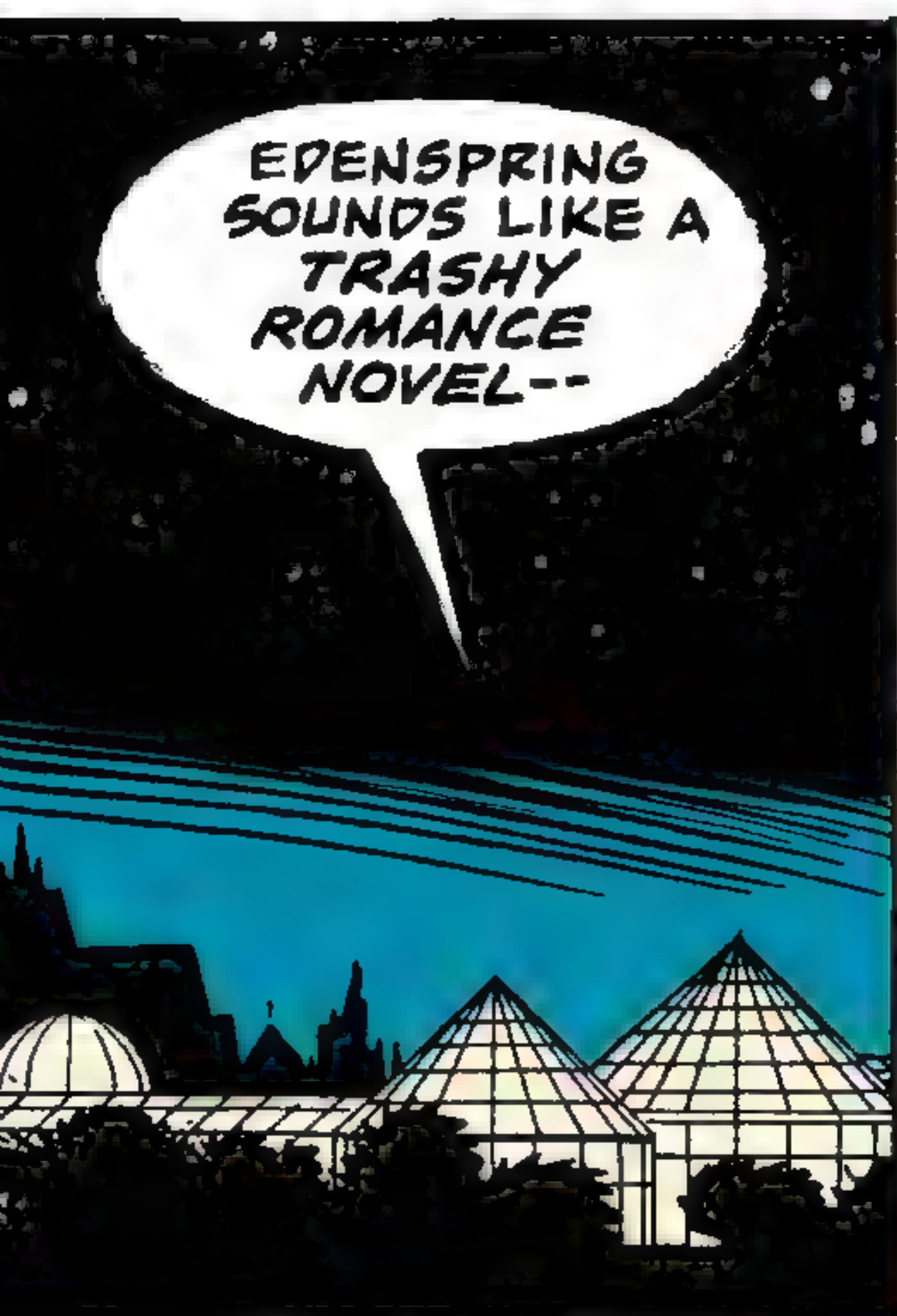
NOT A
PROBLEM.

*Ironic that with all
my resources, I'm
putting faith--*

*-- in a PROTECTIVE SALVE
whipped up in a COLLEGE
PROFESSOR'S kitchen.*



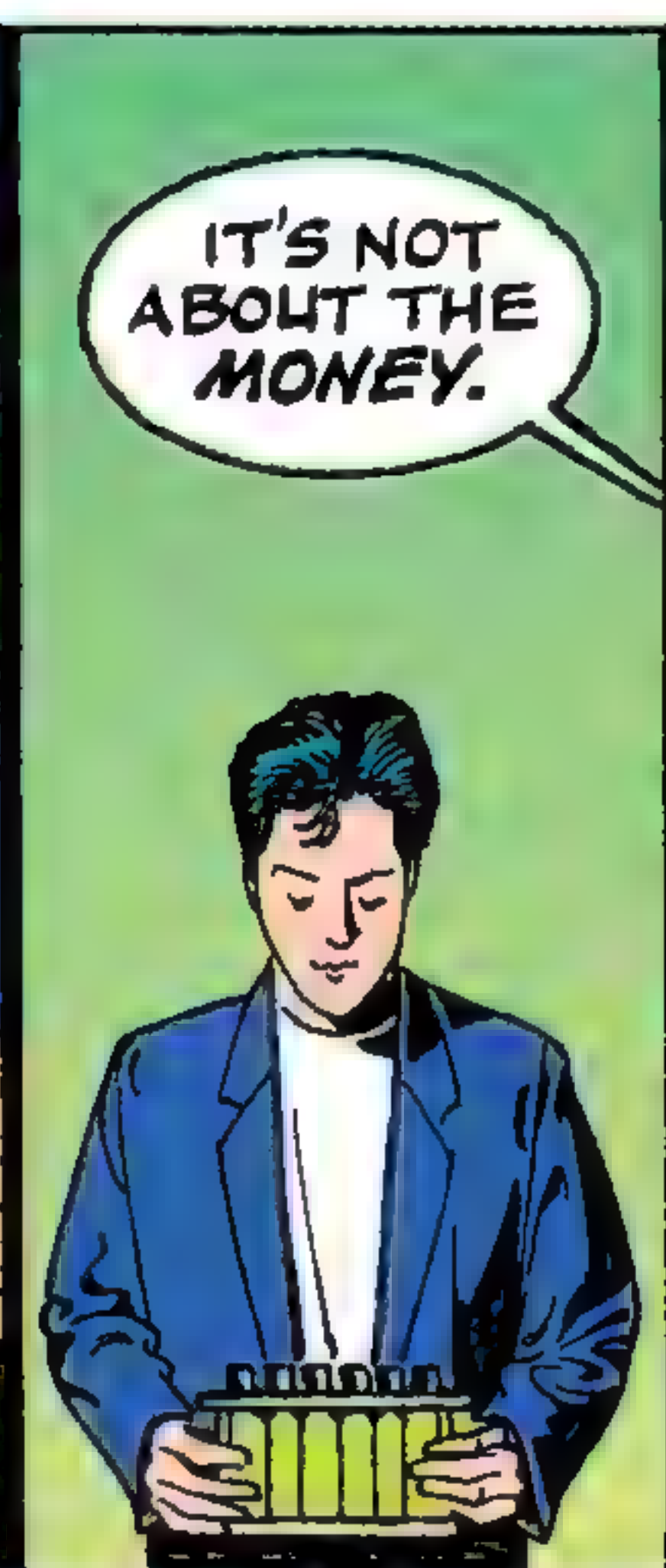




EDENSPRING
SOUNDS LIKE A
TRASHY
ROMANCE
NOVEL--



-- BUT WHO
CARES-- IT'S GONNA
PUT US BOTH IN
SOME **SERIOUS**
CASH--



IT'S NOT
ABOUT THE
MONEY.

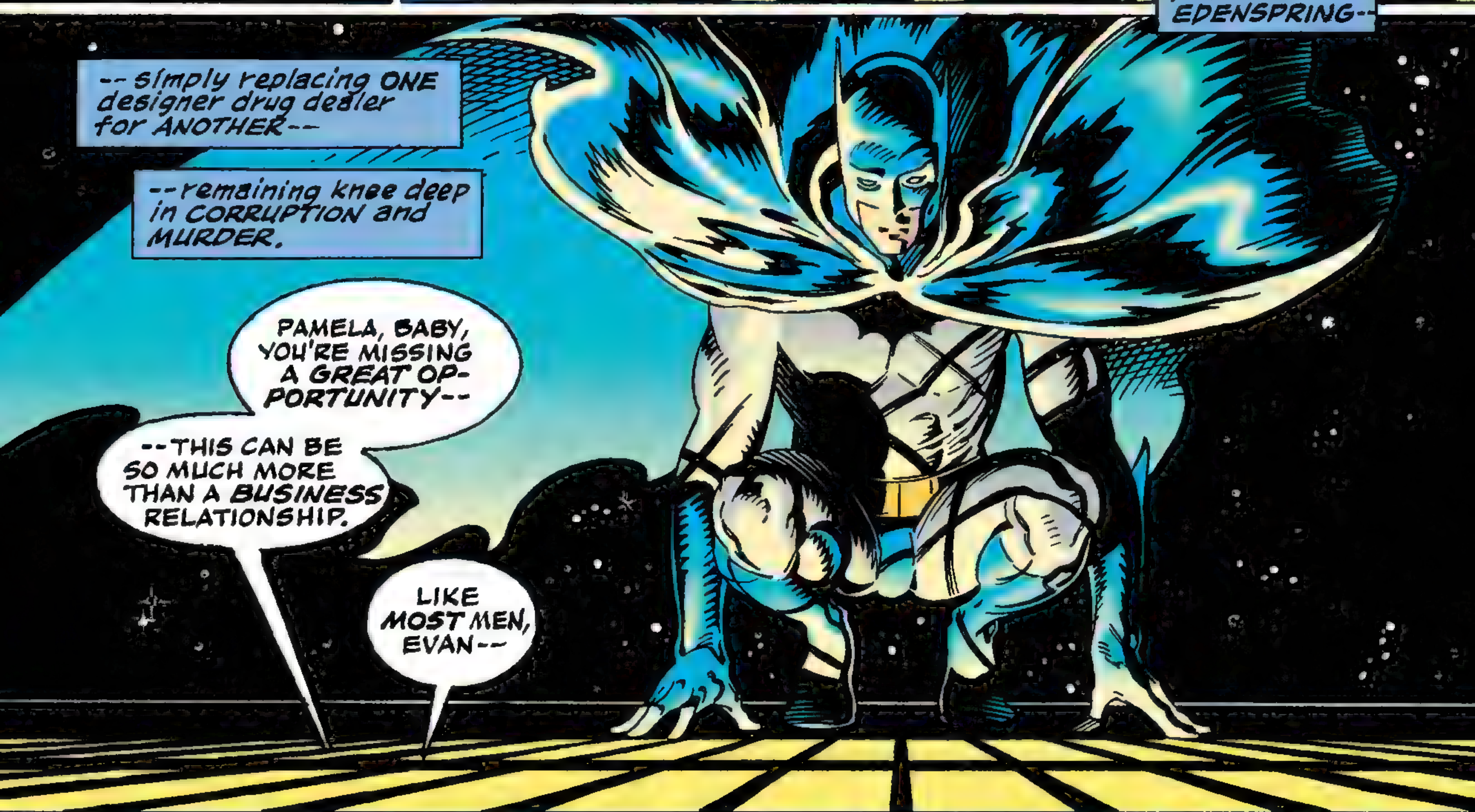


IT'S
ABOUT
CON-
TROL--



BUT I
DON'T EXPECT
YOU TO
UNDERSTAND,
EVAN.

Despite her
FEIGNED inno-
cence, Pamela
continued to
produce
EDENSPRING--



-- simply replacing ONE
designer drug dealer
for ANOTHER--

-- remaining knee deep
in CORRUPTION and
MURDER.

PAMELA, BABY,
YOU'RE MISSING
A GREAT OP-
PORTUNITY--

-- THIS CAN BE
SO MUCH MORE
THAN A BUSINESS
RELATIONSHIP.

LIKE
MOST MEN,
EVAN--



-- YOU'RE SO
PREDICTABLE.

?



SO
ARE
YOU.

!



BATMAN!
BACK OFF,
DON'T
THINK
I WON'T
USE
THIS!



SHUT
UP!

SMEK

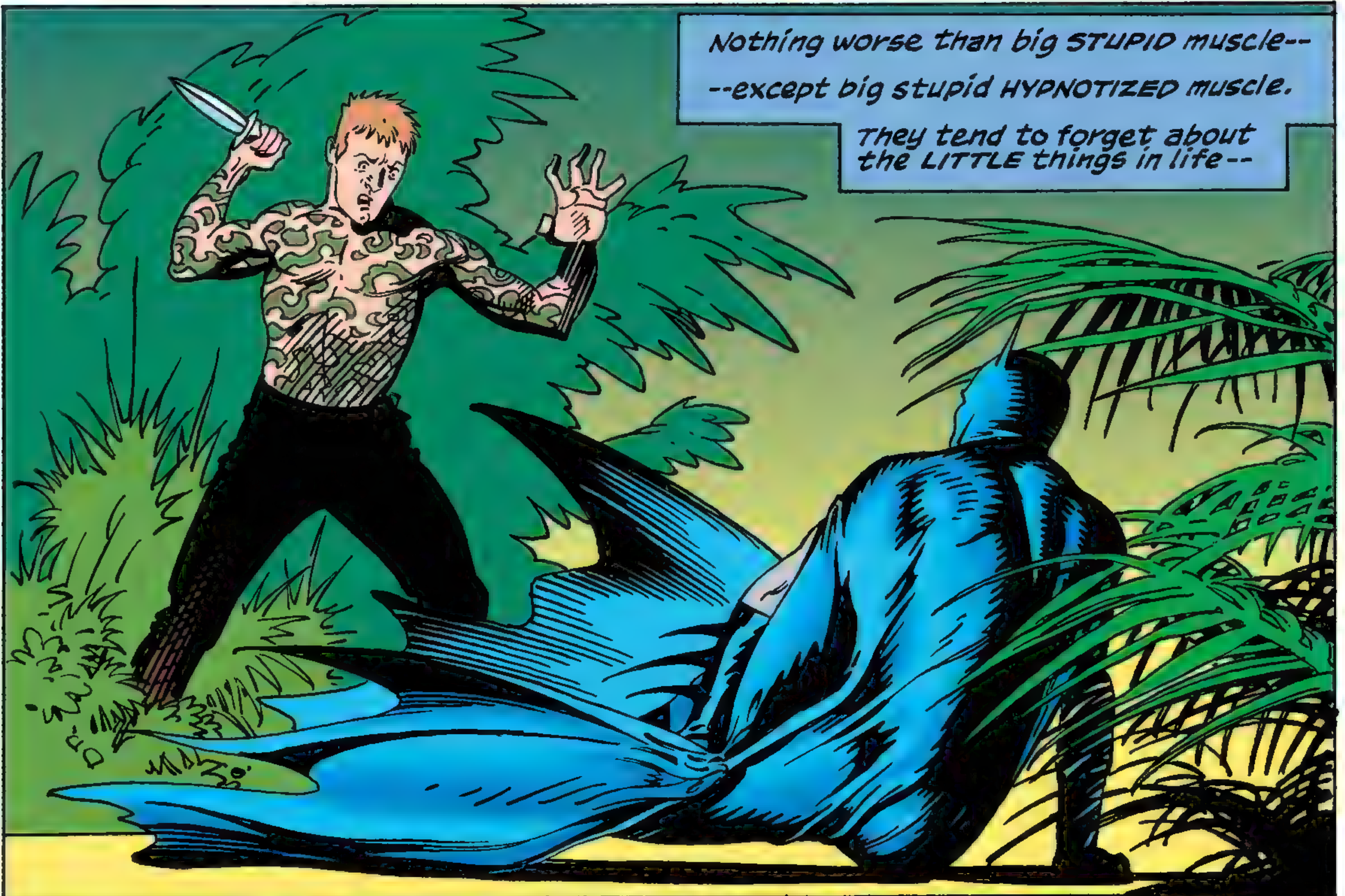
I can feel her PRESENCE from across the room -- ELECTRIC -- PULSATING -- NOW I put Sylvian's salve to the TEST.

NO MORE GAMES, IVY.

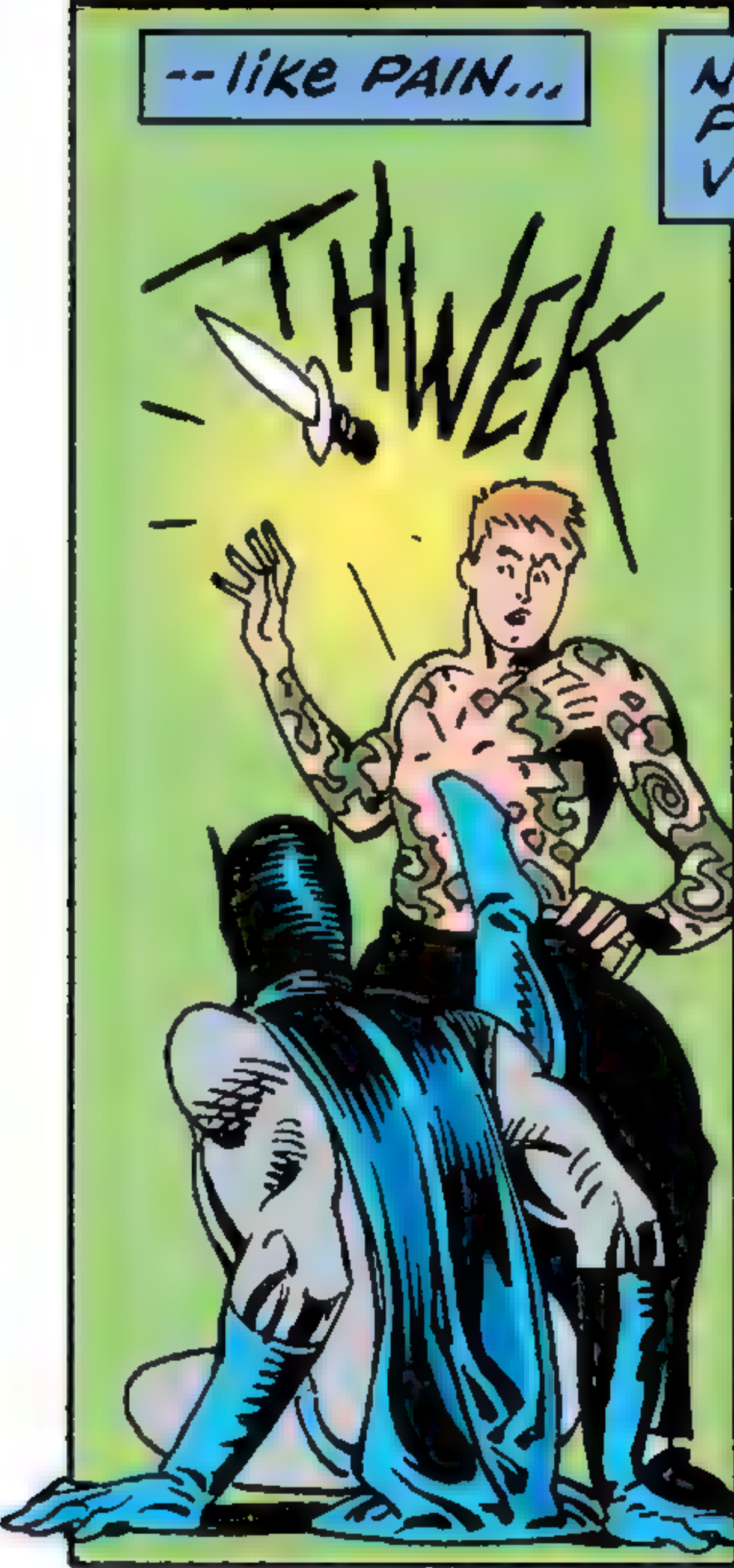




Victor CHU?
Dominique's
boytoy?

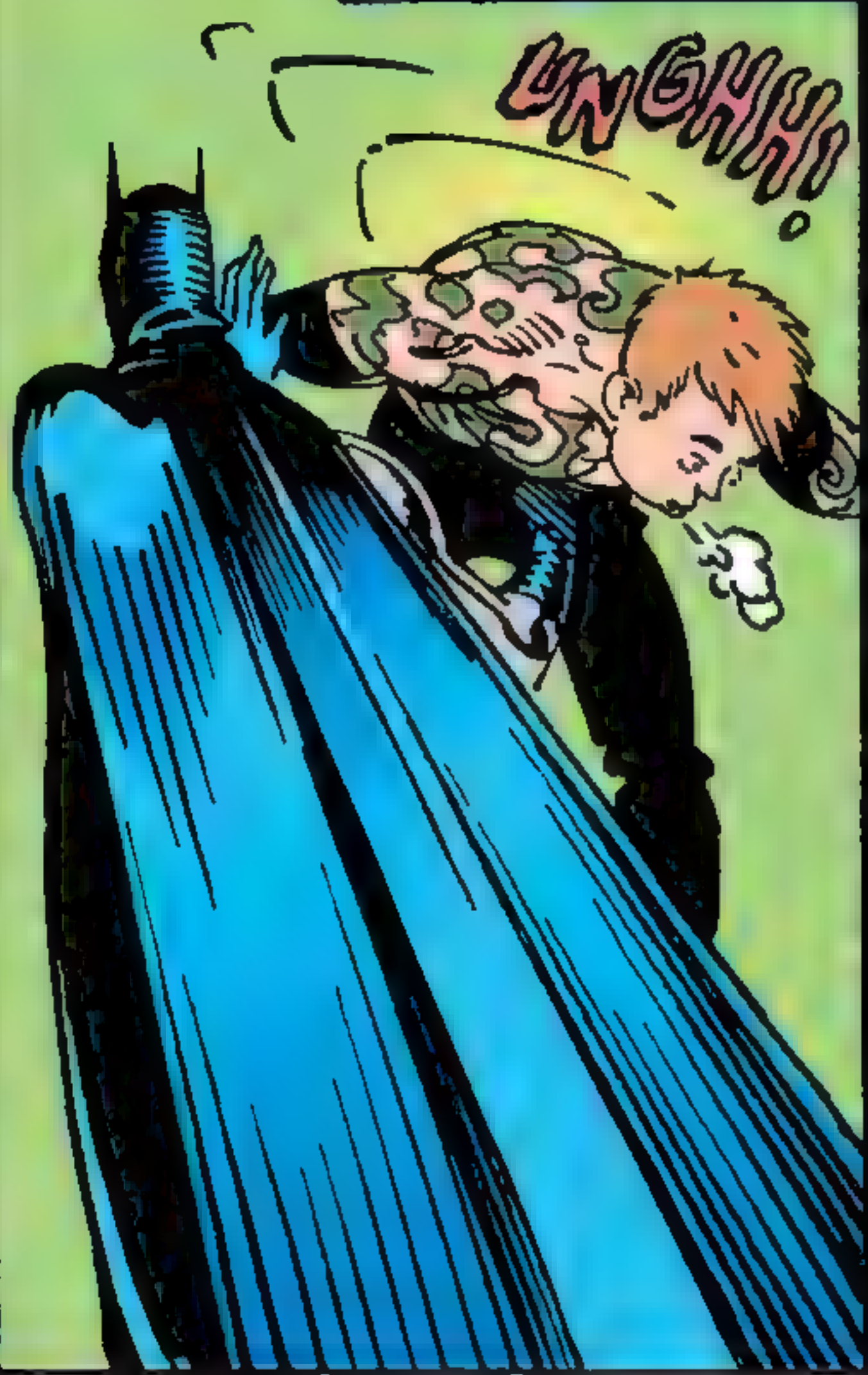


Nothing worse than big STUPID muscle--
--except big stupid HYPNOTIZED muscle.
They tend to forget about
the LITTLE things in life--

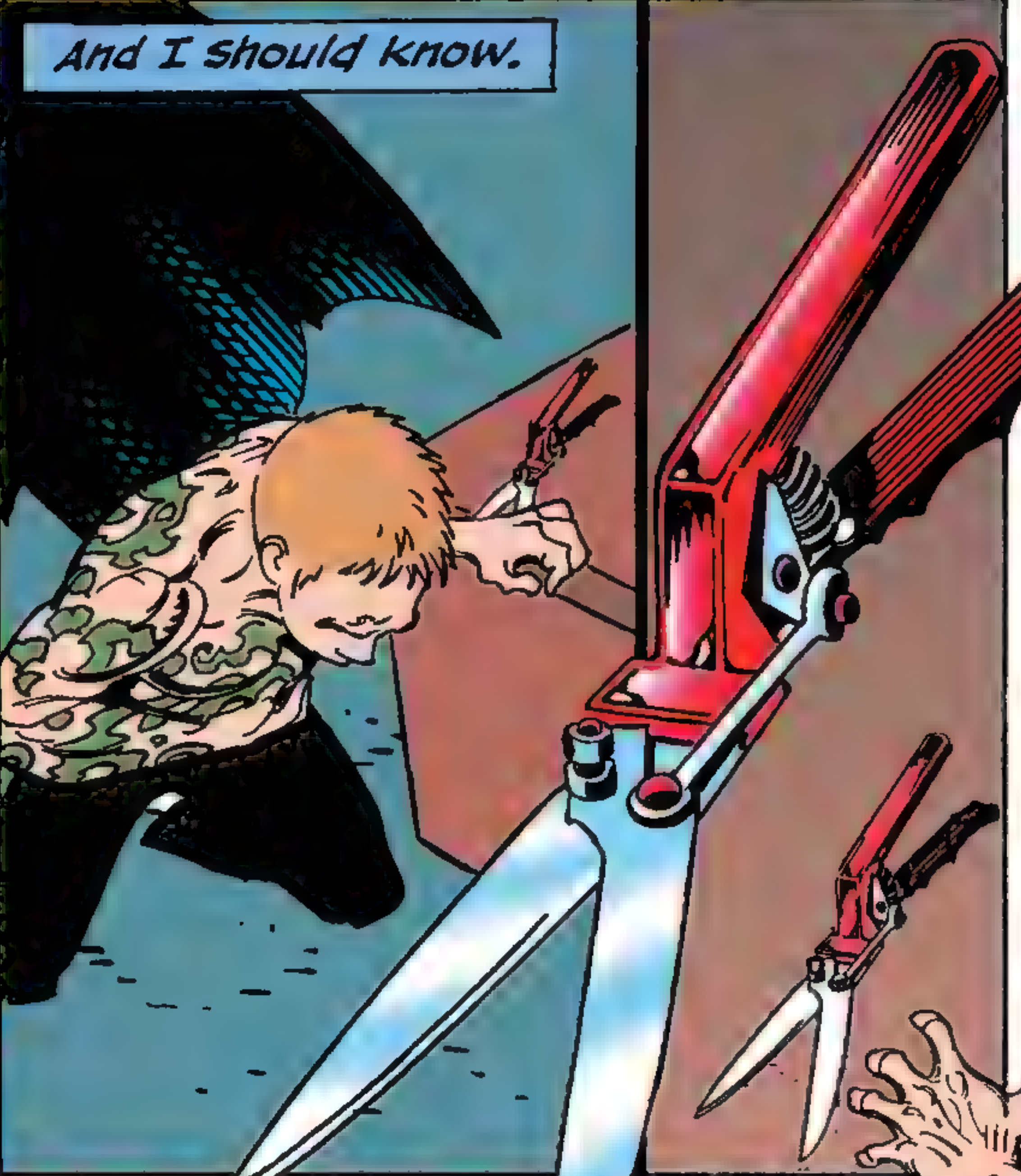


--like PAIN...

Nothing
PERSONAL,
Victor--

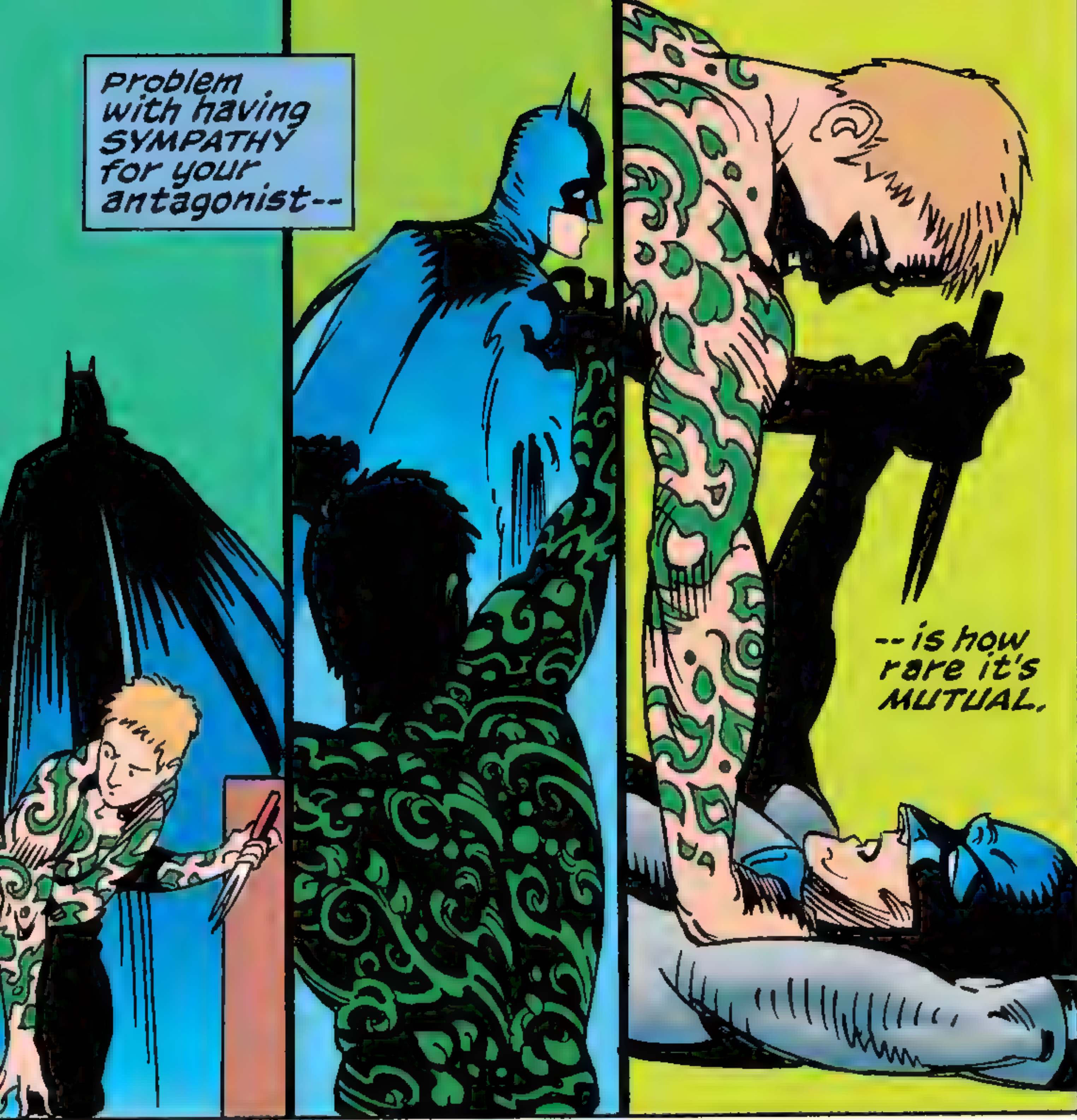


--but all this
MACHISMO ON
IVY's behalf is
getting OLD.



And I should know.

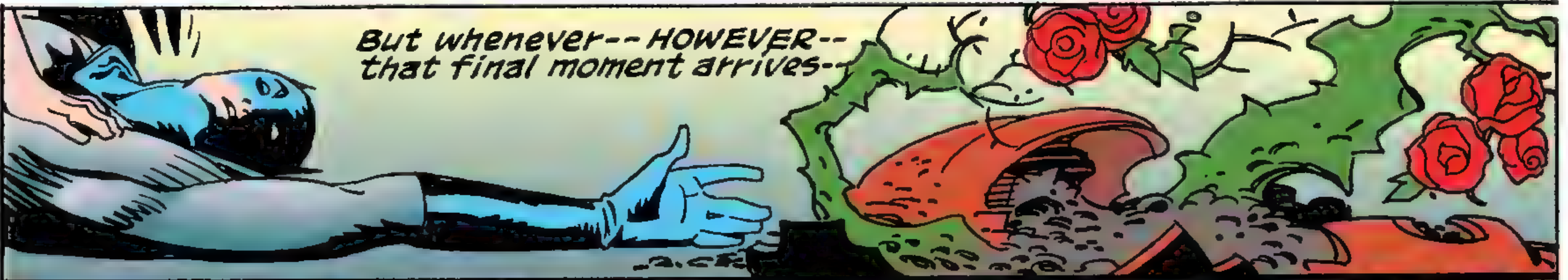
Problem
with having
SYMPATHY
for your
antagonist--



--is how
rare it's
MUTUAL.

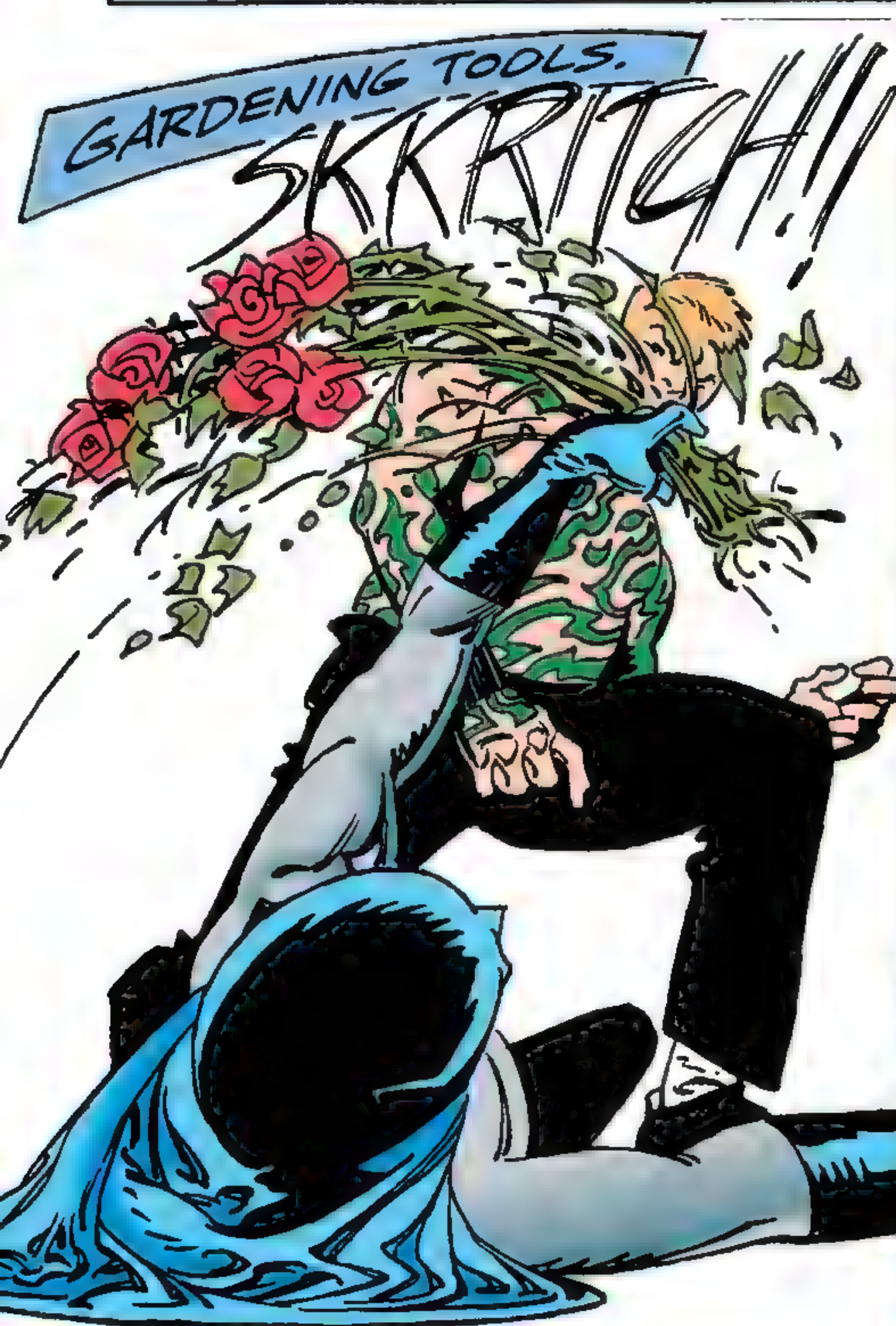


I'm confronted by my own
mortality on a NIGHTLY basis--



But whenever-- HOWEVER--
that final moment arrives--

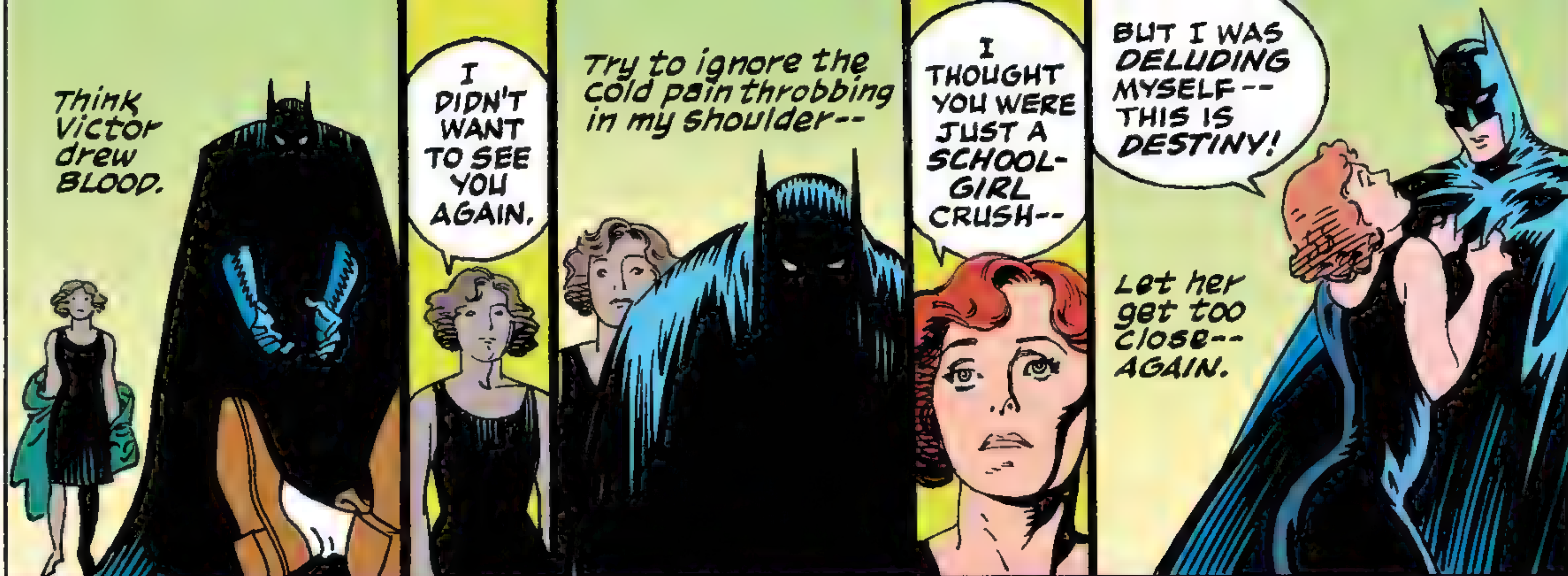
I'm DAMNED... ..if it'll... ..be... ..by... ..



GARDENING TOOLS.
SKRRITCH!!



THUD



Think
Victor
drew
BLOOD.

I
DIDN'T
WANT
TO SEE
YOU
AGAIN.

Try to ignore the
cold pain throbbing
in my shoulder--

I
THOUGHT
YOU WERE
JUST A
SCHOOL-
GIRL
CRUSH--

BUT I WAS
DELUDING
MYSELF--
THIS IS
DESTINY!

Let her
get too
close--
AGAIN.

YOU
BELONNNNG
TO ME!

Salve must've rubbed
off in the fight--

--her kiss like grab-
bing a LIVE WIRE
in the rain--

--like a FEVER
DREAM in the
jungle--

WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE TO
ME, IVY?...

WHAT
HAVE

YOU....

I'VE
CAPTURED
YOUR
SOUL.



DON'T RESIST,
MY SWEET--
THIS IS MY
WORLD--



Got to be--
hallucinating--



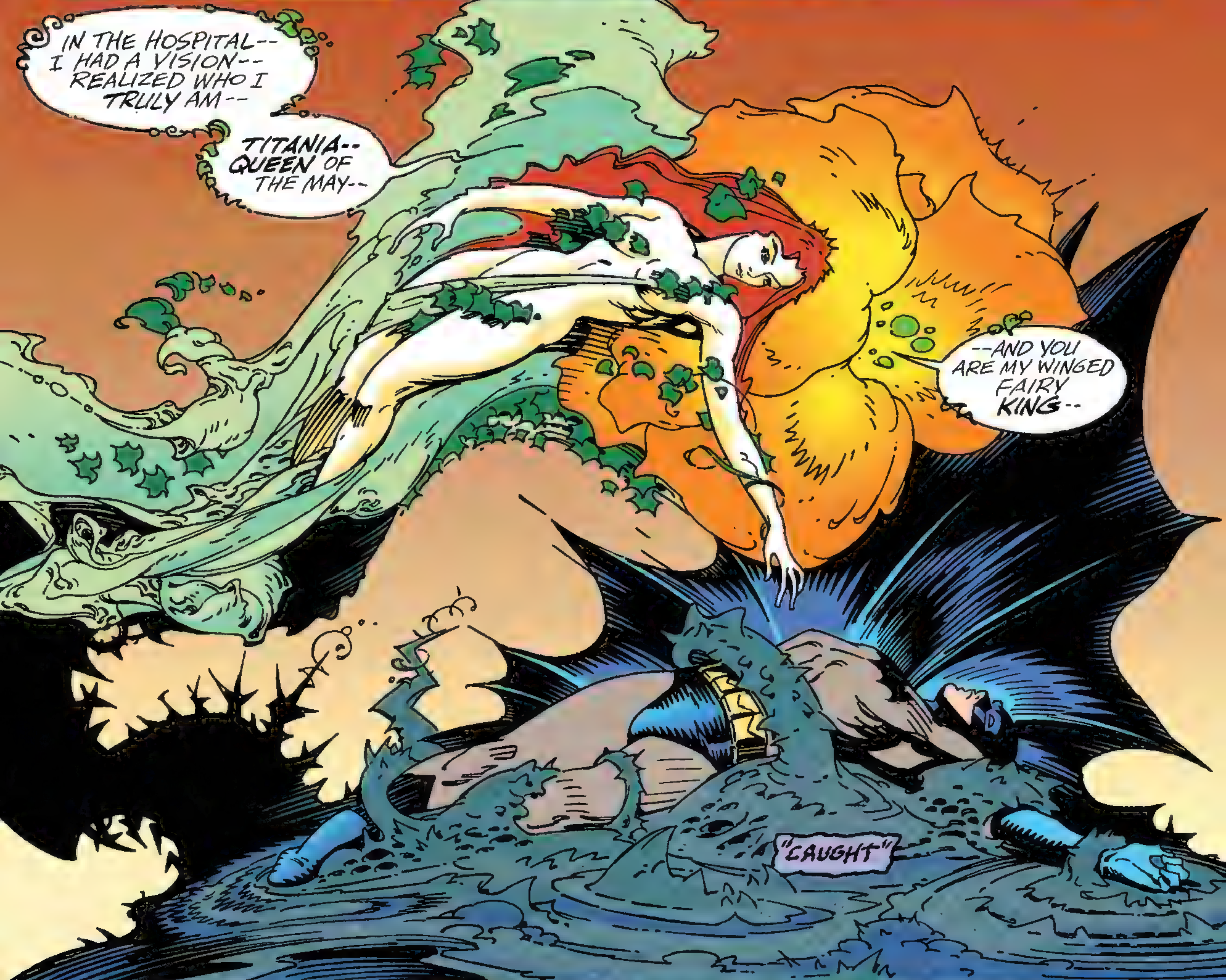
--but so
REAL--

--can't
move--

--caught in Ivy's
BRIARPATCH--

IN THE HOSPITAL--
I HAD A VISION--
REALIZED WHO I
TRULY AM--

TITANIA--
QUEEN OF
THE MAY--



--AND YOU
ARE MY WINGED
FAIRY
KING--

"CAUGHT"

--AND A KING SHOULD HAVE NO
SECRETS FROM HIS QUEEN--



O-O-DON'T--



LET ME
LOOK INTO
YOUR SECRET
HEART--



Her TENDRILS
wrapped around
my EVERY nerve--

So EASY to
give in--



HOW
CAN
YOU
DENY
ME?

--but CAN'T--not the mask--



--have to
RESIST--

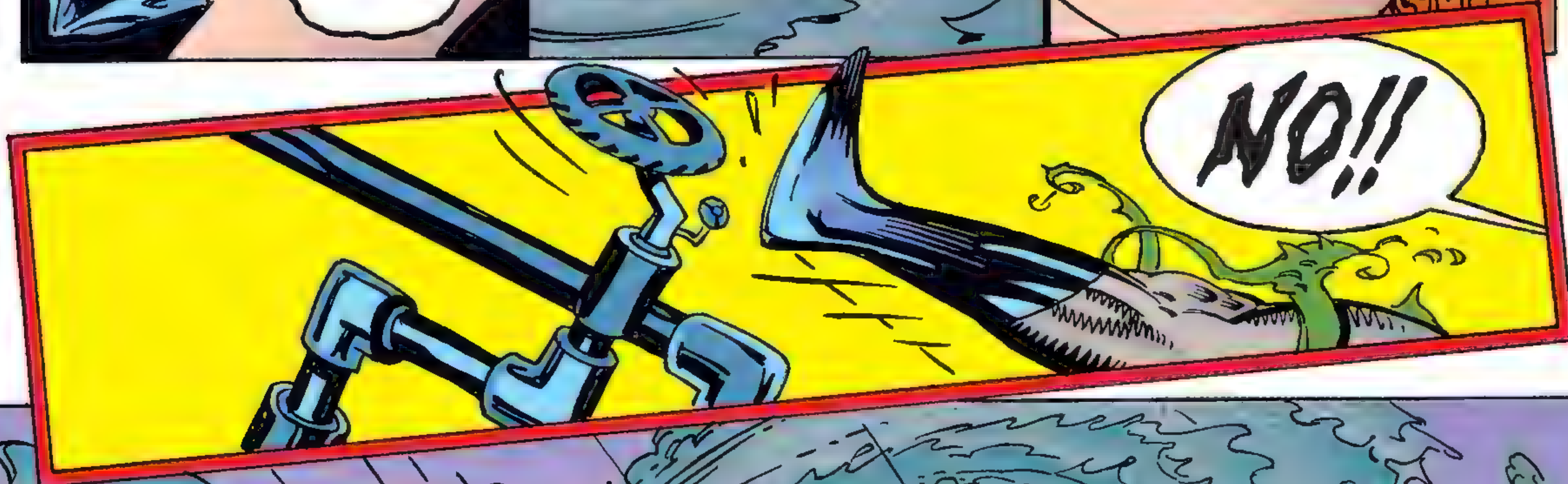
NO!



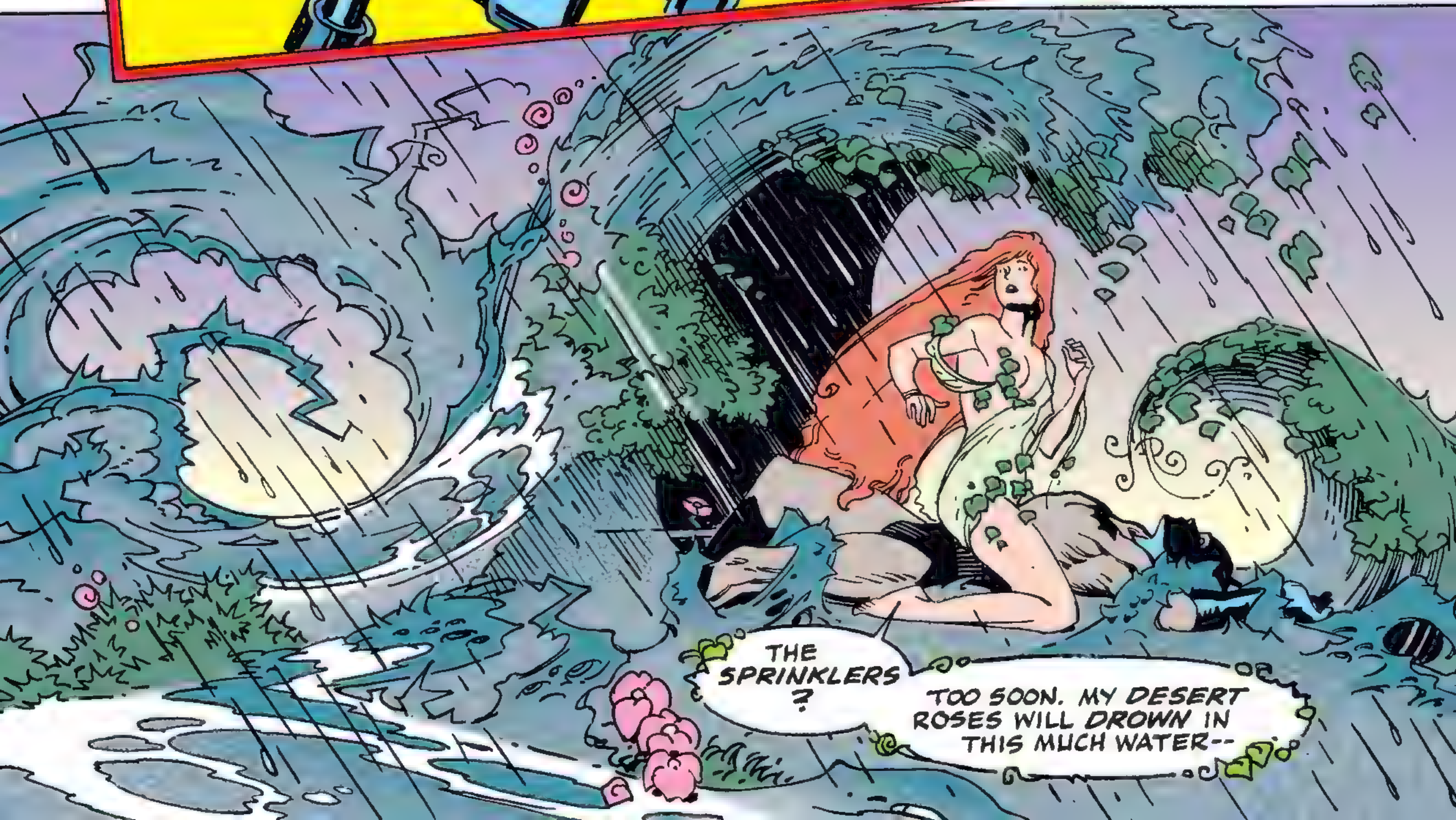
NO!



YOU WANT
ME TO
KNOW--



NO!!



THE
SPRINKLERS
?

TOO SOON. MY DESERT
ROSES WILL DROWN IN
THIS MUCH WATER--

WATER -- COLD -- HARD --



IVY GONE --



-- Everything --

-- returning to --

-- NORMAL --



No fairy tale in the black forests --

-- just dirt-spattered tile.

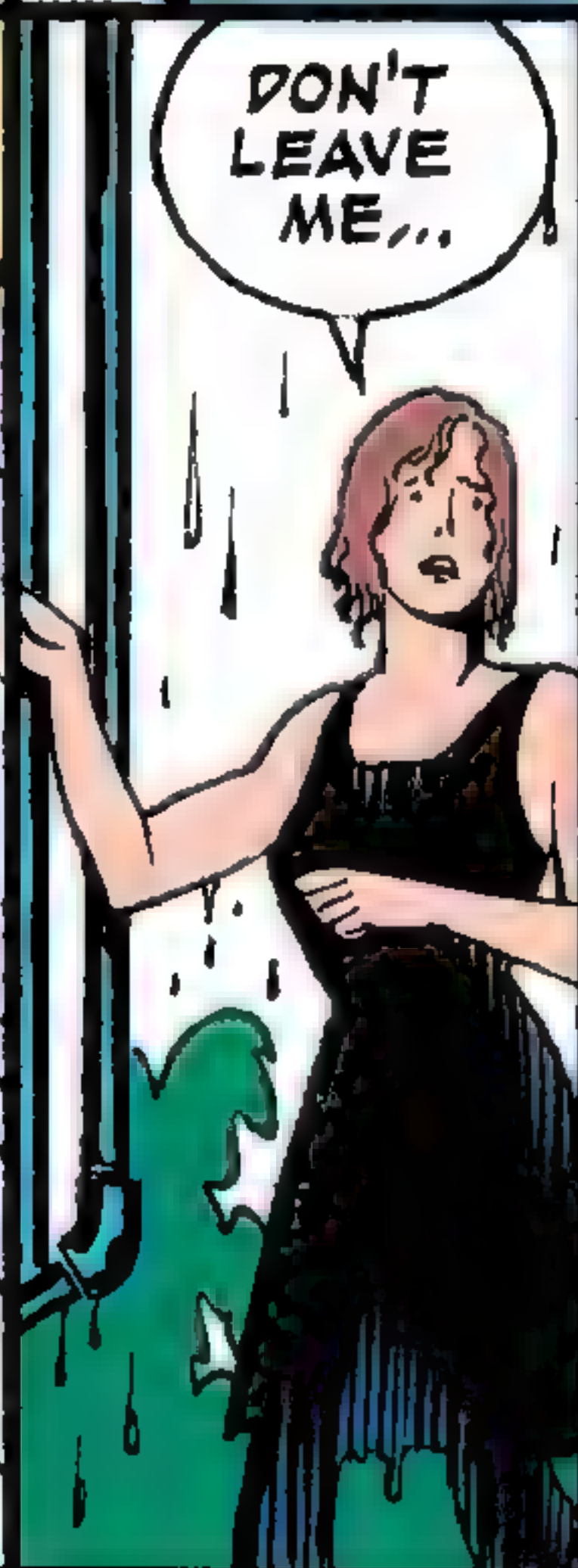


NO!

SKREE
SKREE



DON'T
LEAVE
ME...



-- MY
LOVE --



YOU COULDN'T
MAINTAIN THAT HOLD
ON ME FOREVER,
IVY.

I WON'T GO
BACK TO THE
HOSPITAL --



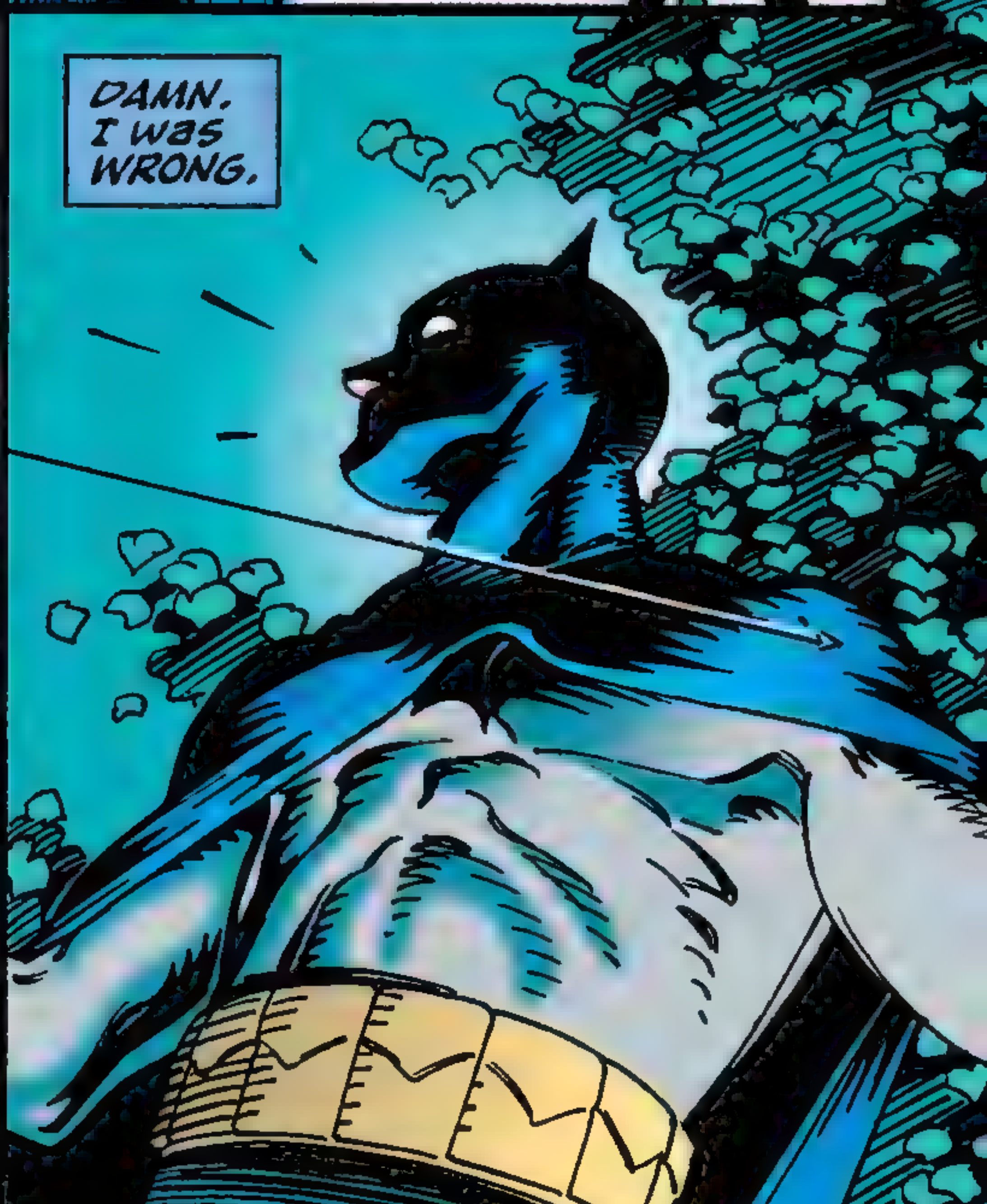
I'M NOT
CRAZY.
I'M
NOT!

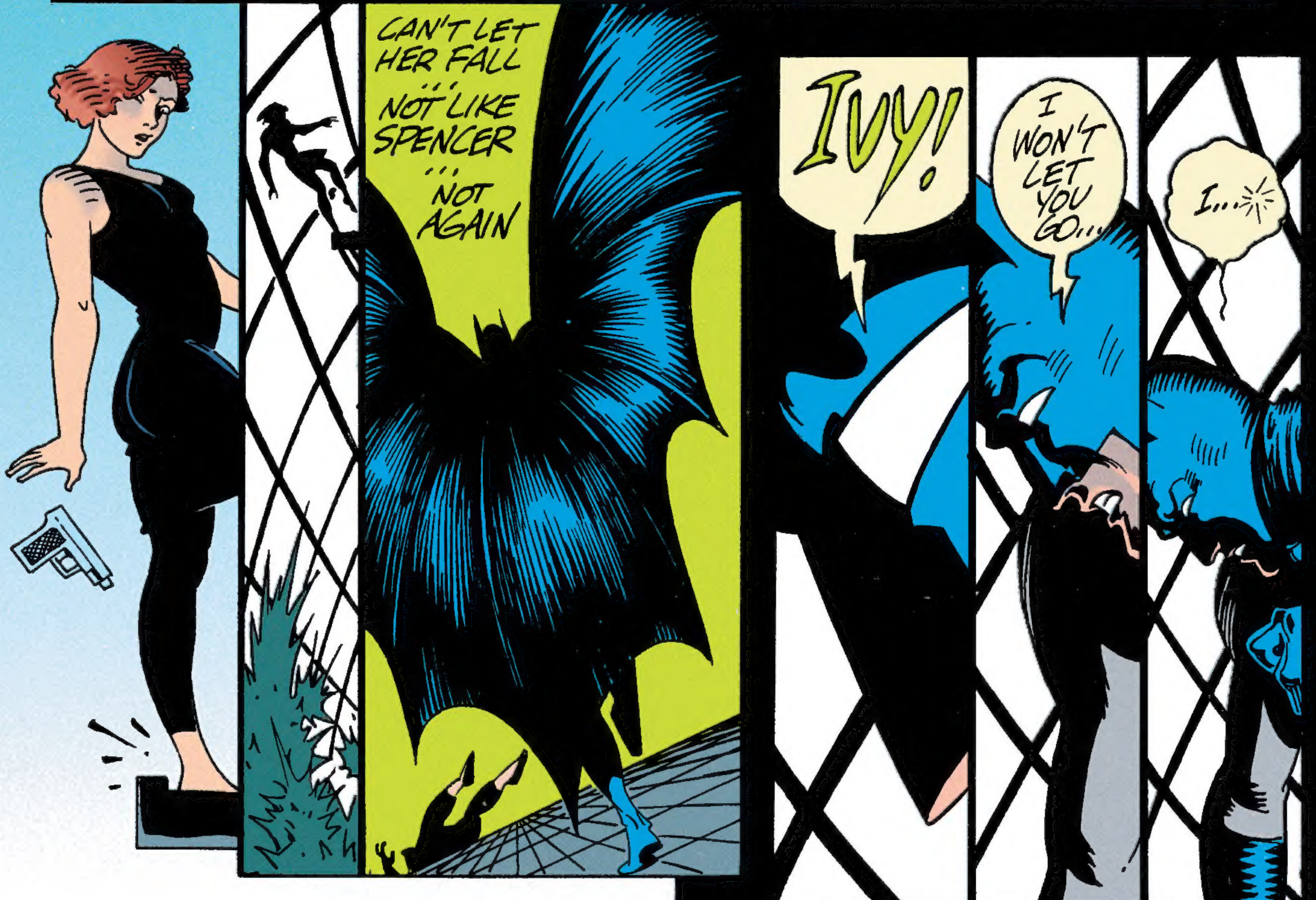
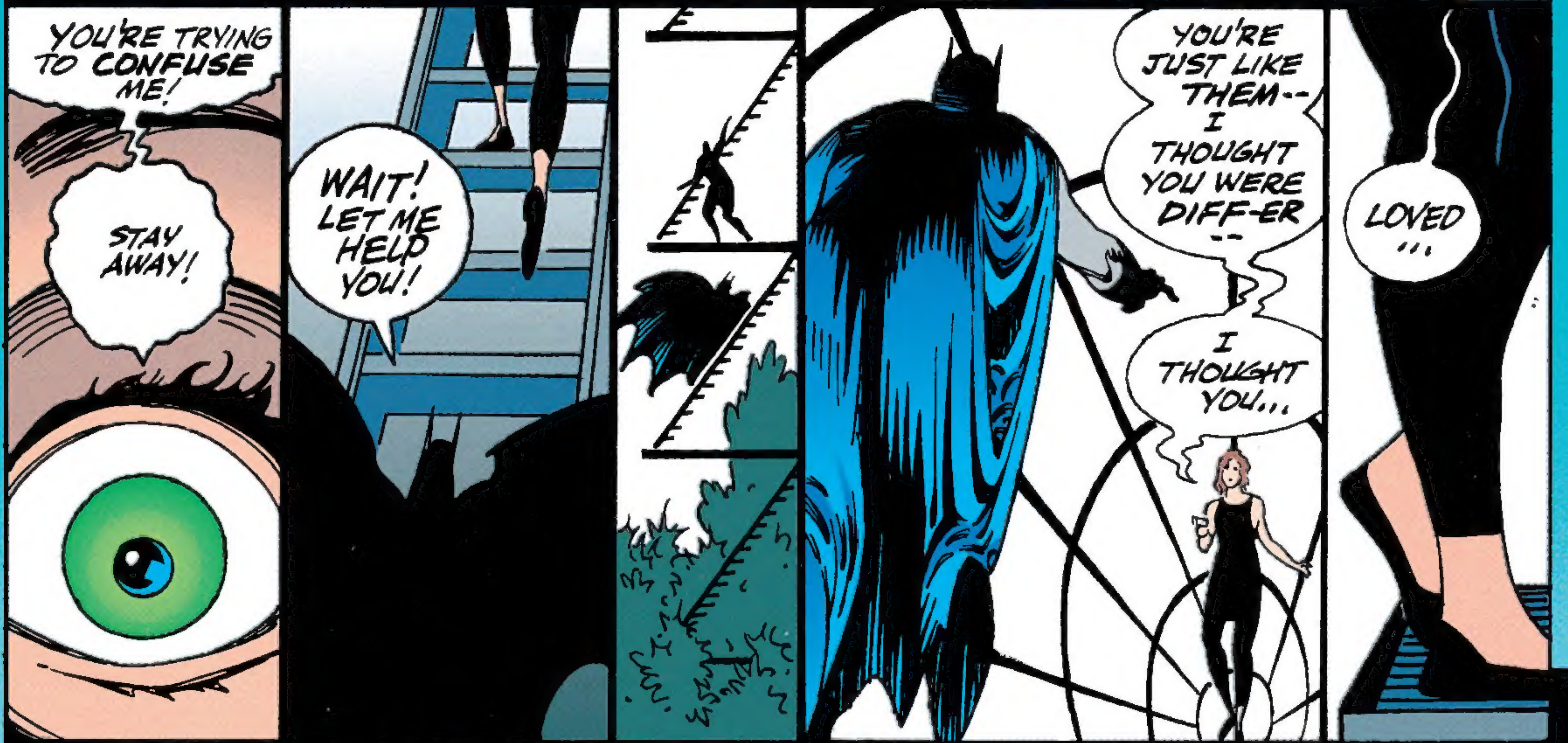
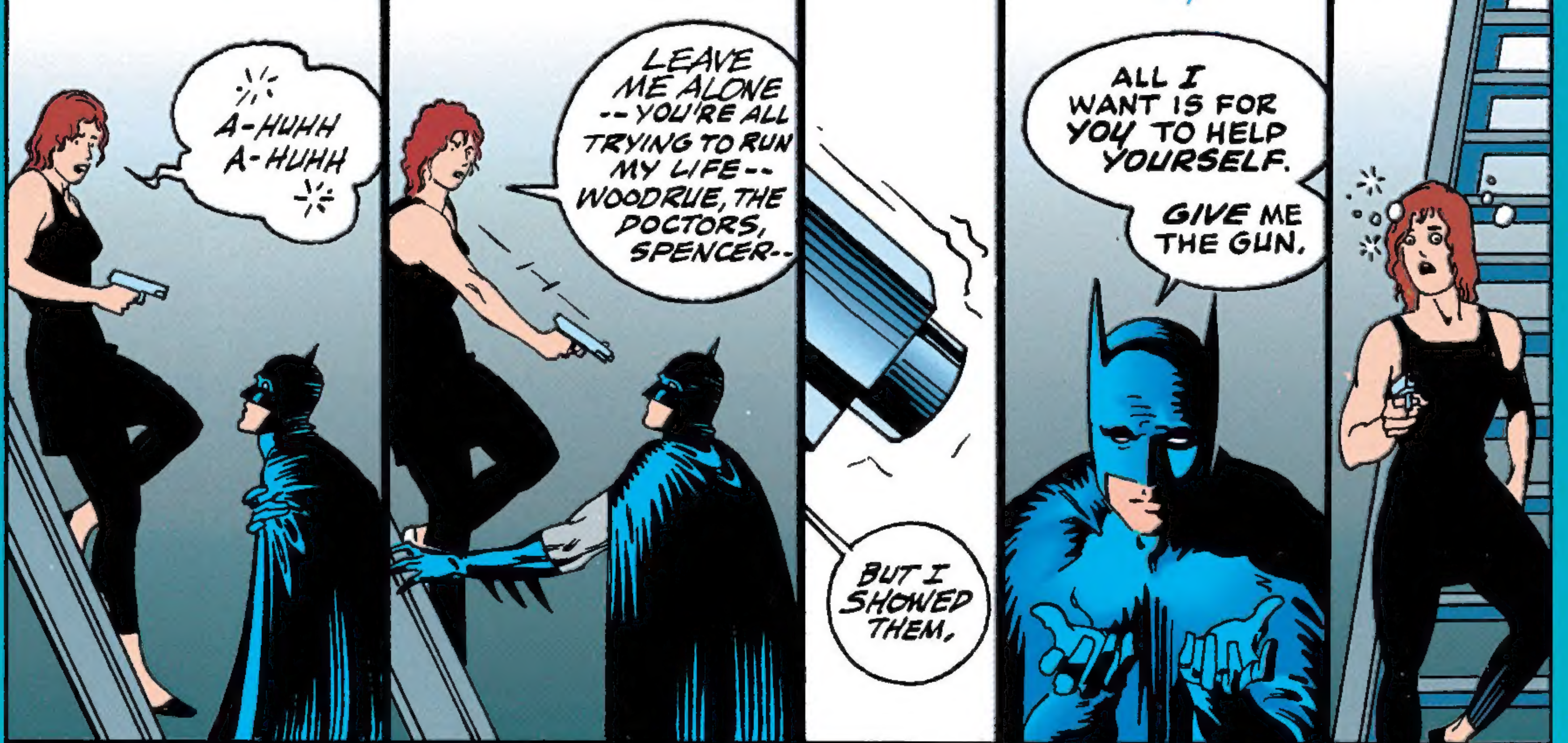


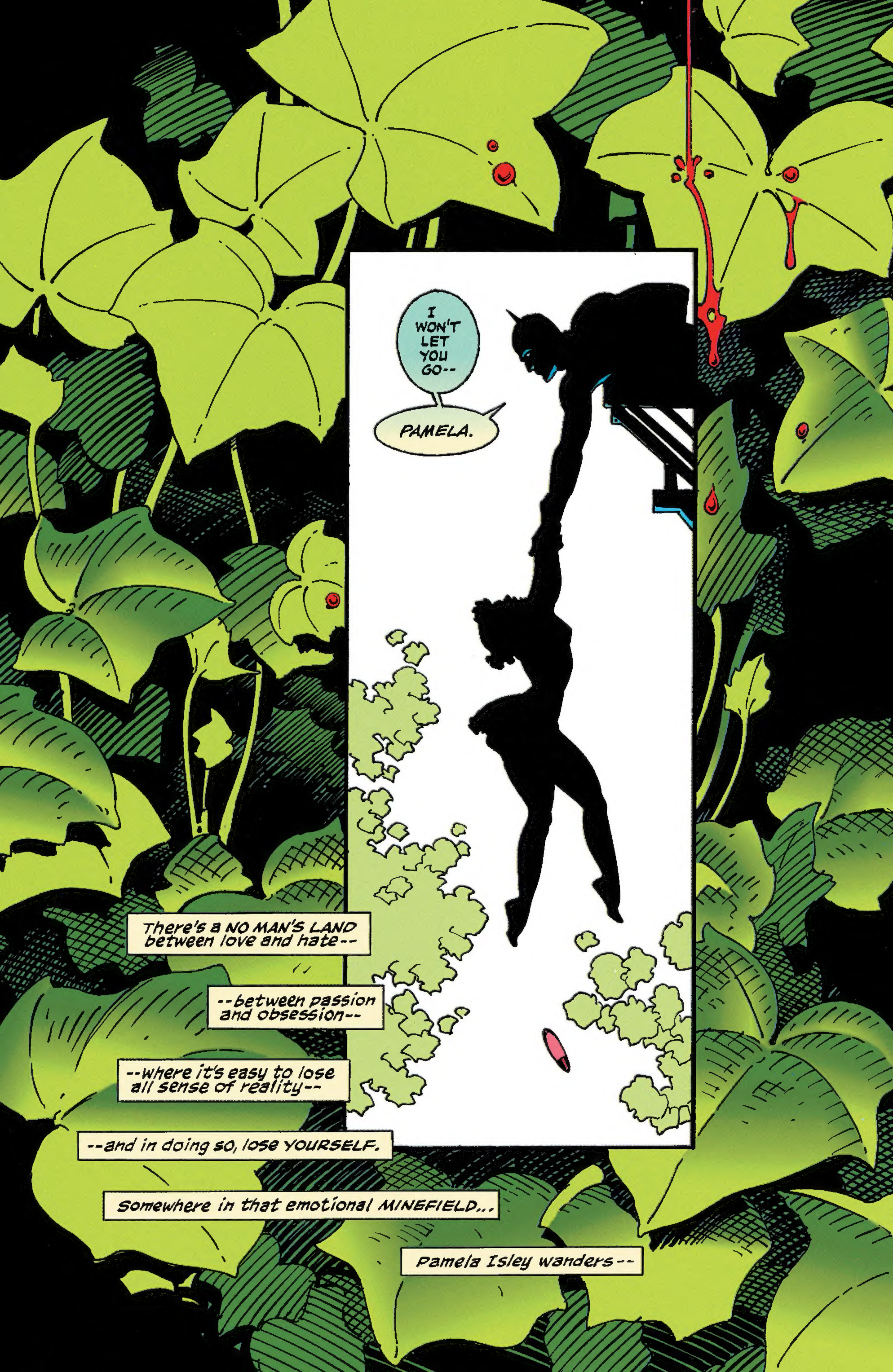
IVY, YOU'LL
ONLY HURT
YOURSELF.



DAMN.
I WAS
WRONG.





A comic book panel showing Batman and Pamela Isley in a jungle. Batman is on the right, holding Pamela's arm. Pamela is on the left, looking up at him. The background is filled with large green leaves and vines. A red vine with a thorn is visible on the right side. The scene is set in a dense jungle environment.

I WON'T
LET
YOU
GO--

PAMELA.

*There's a NO MAN'S LAND
between love and hate--*

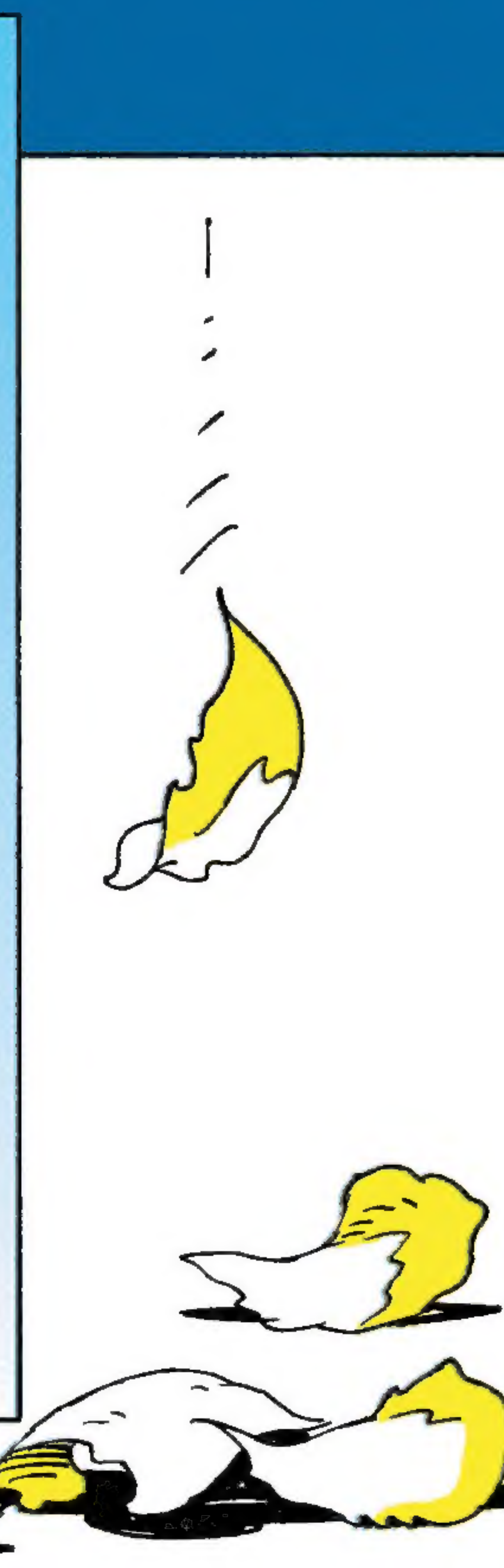
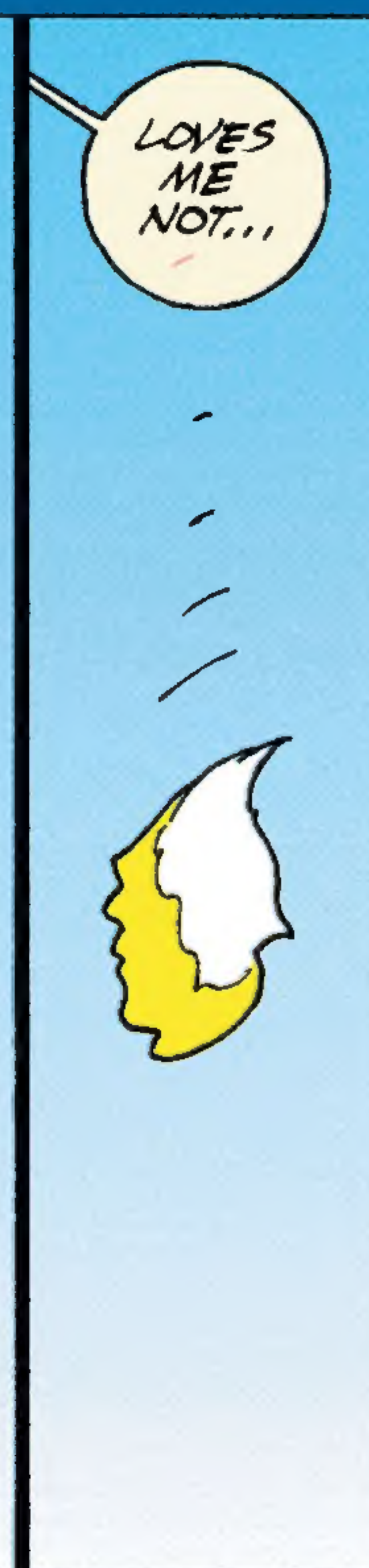
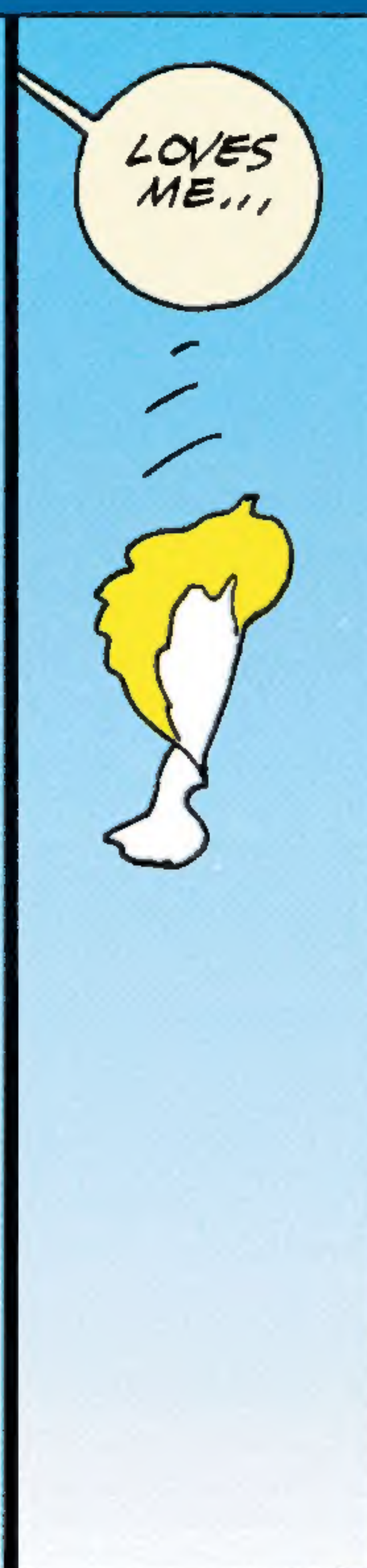
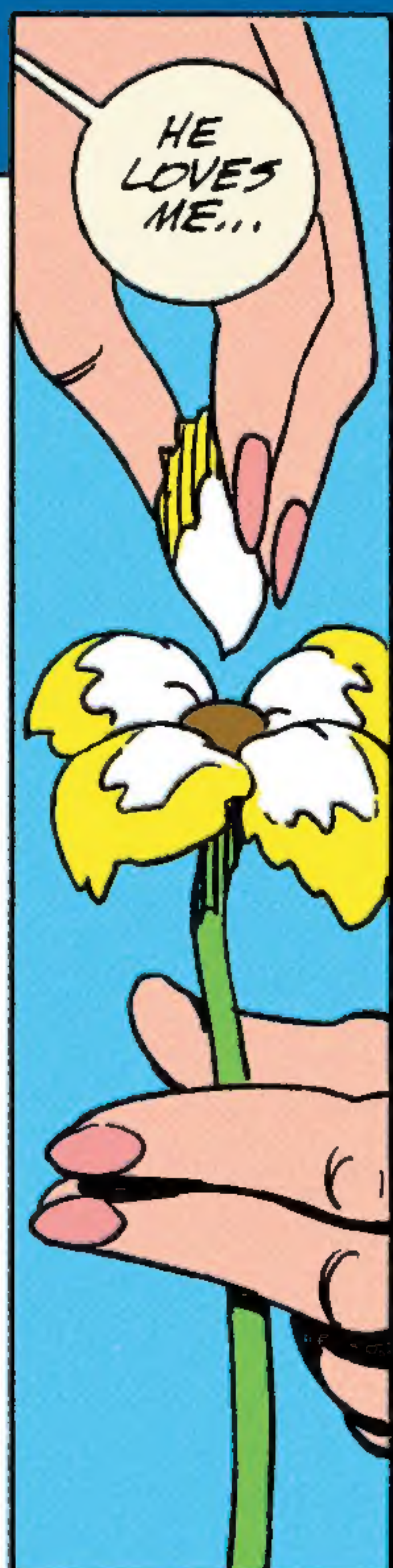
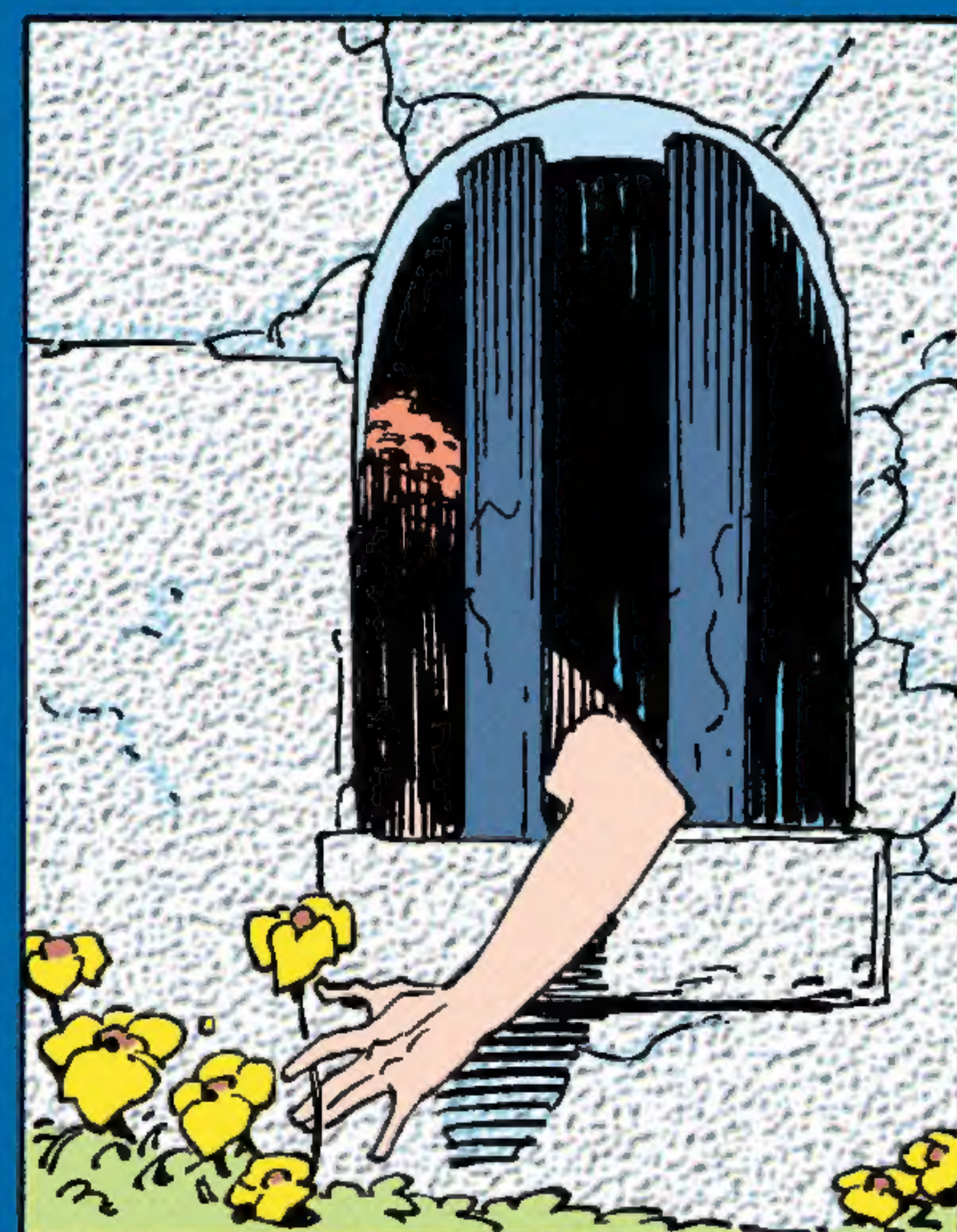
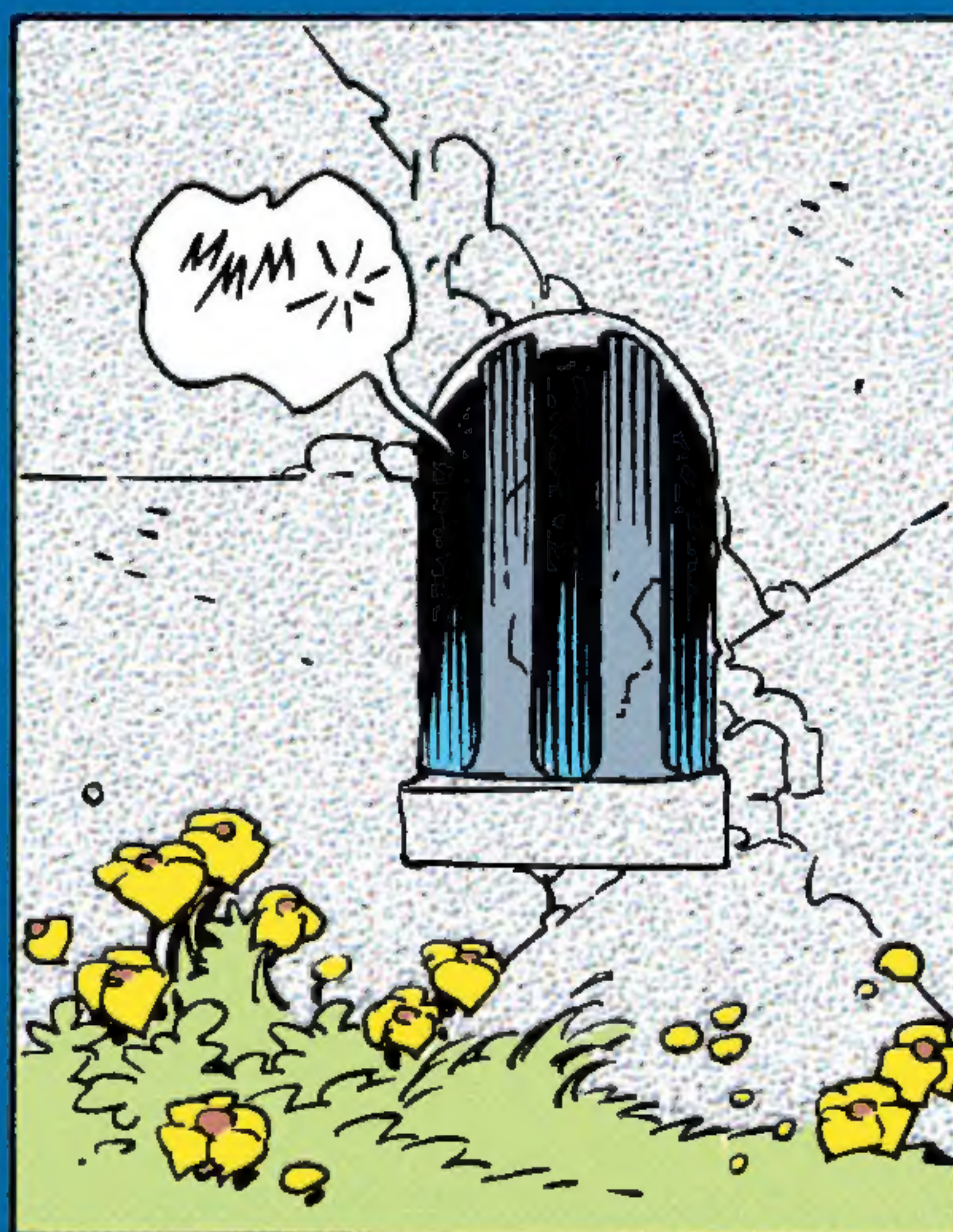
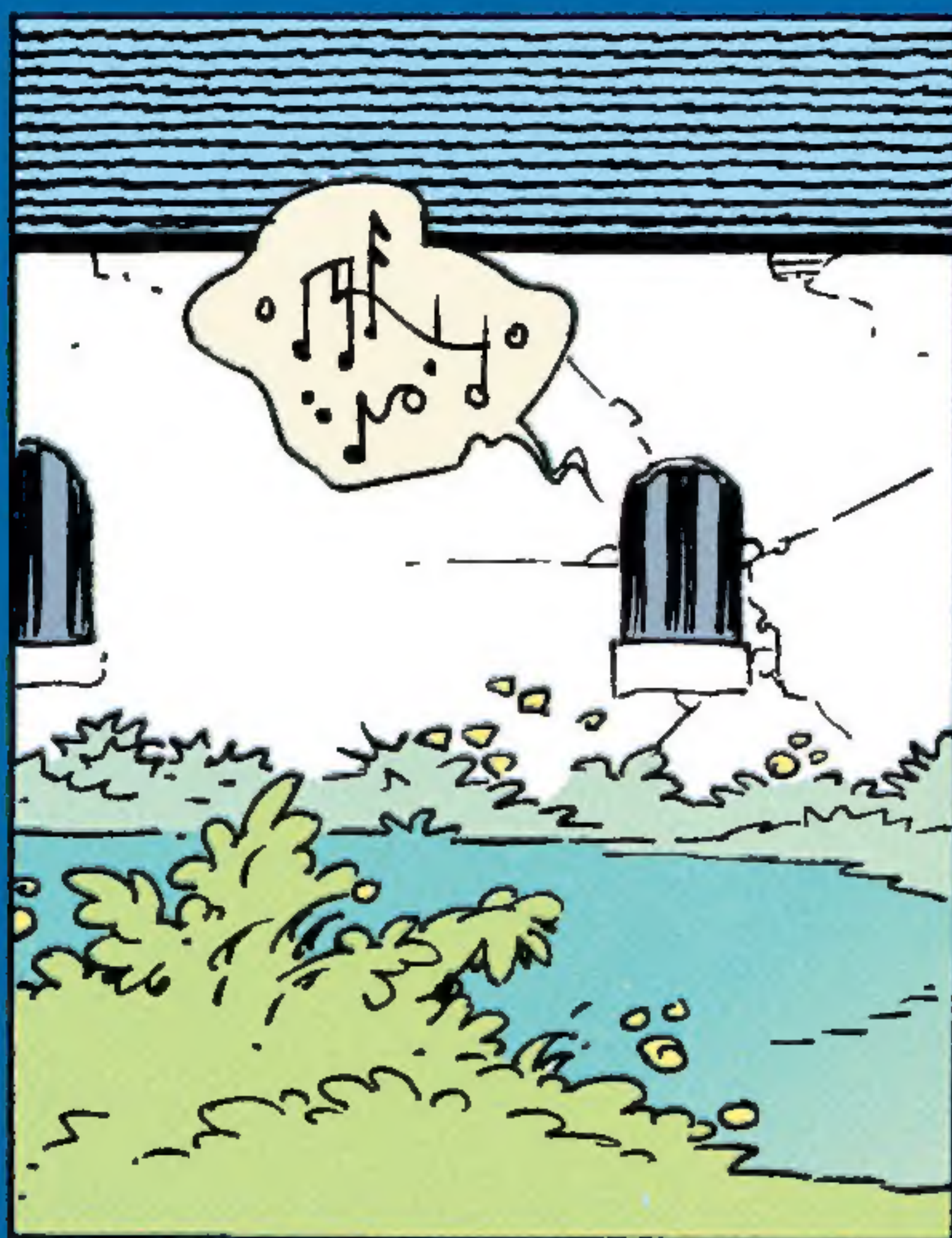
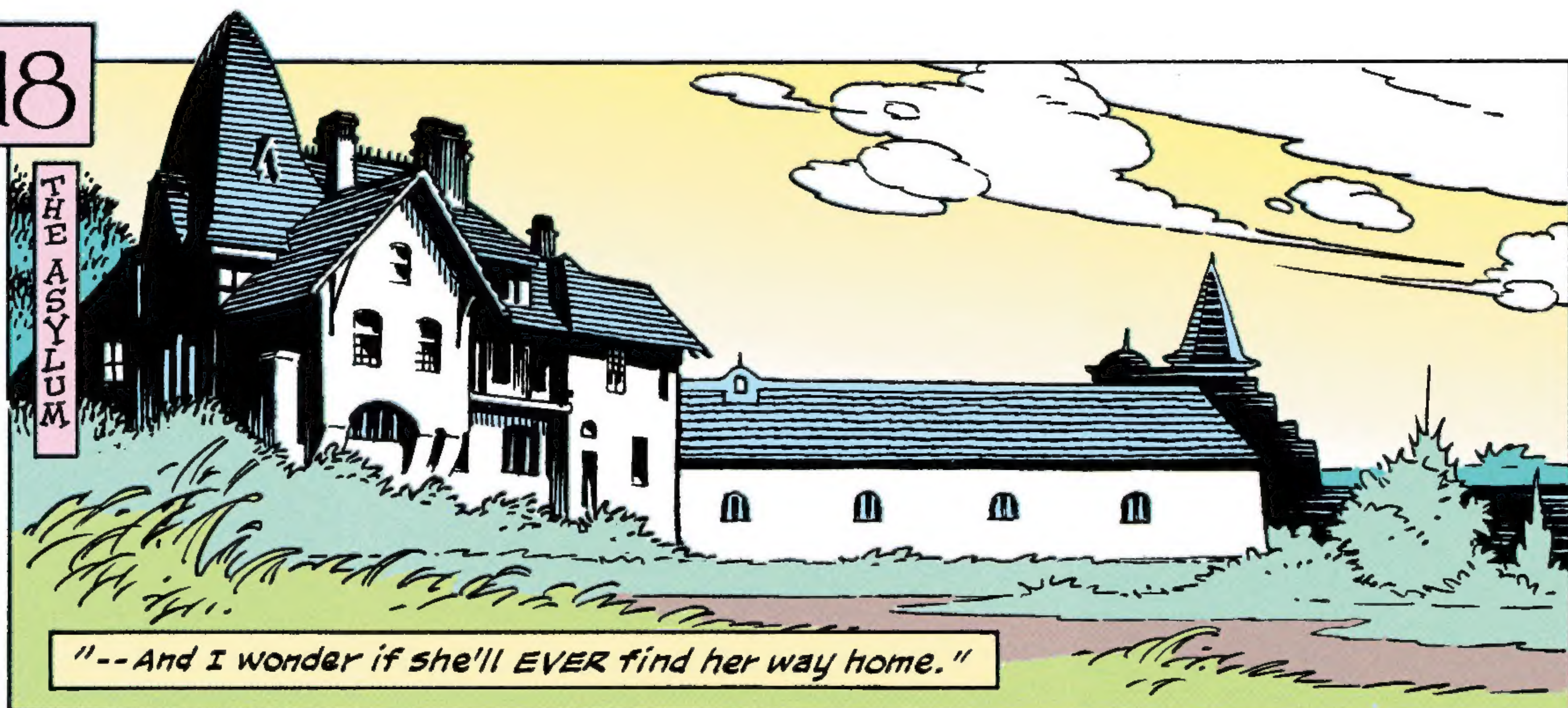
*--between passion
and obsession--*

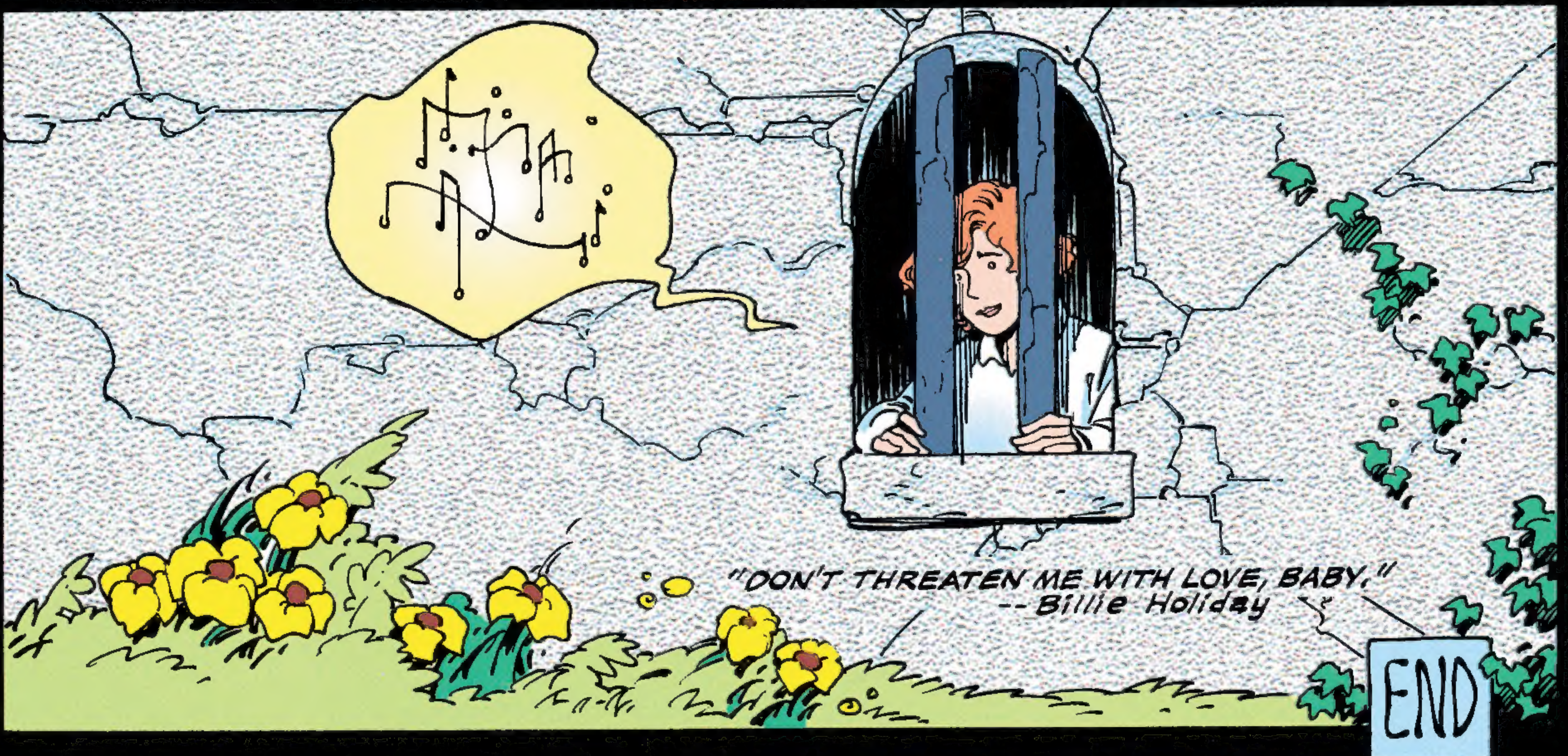
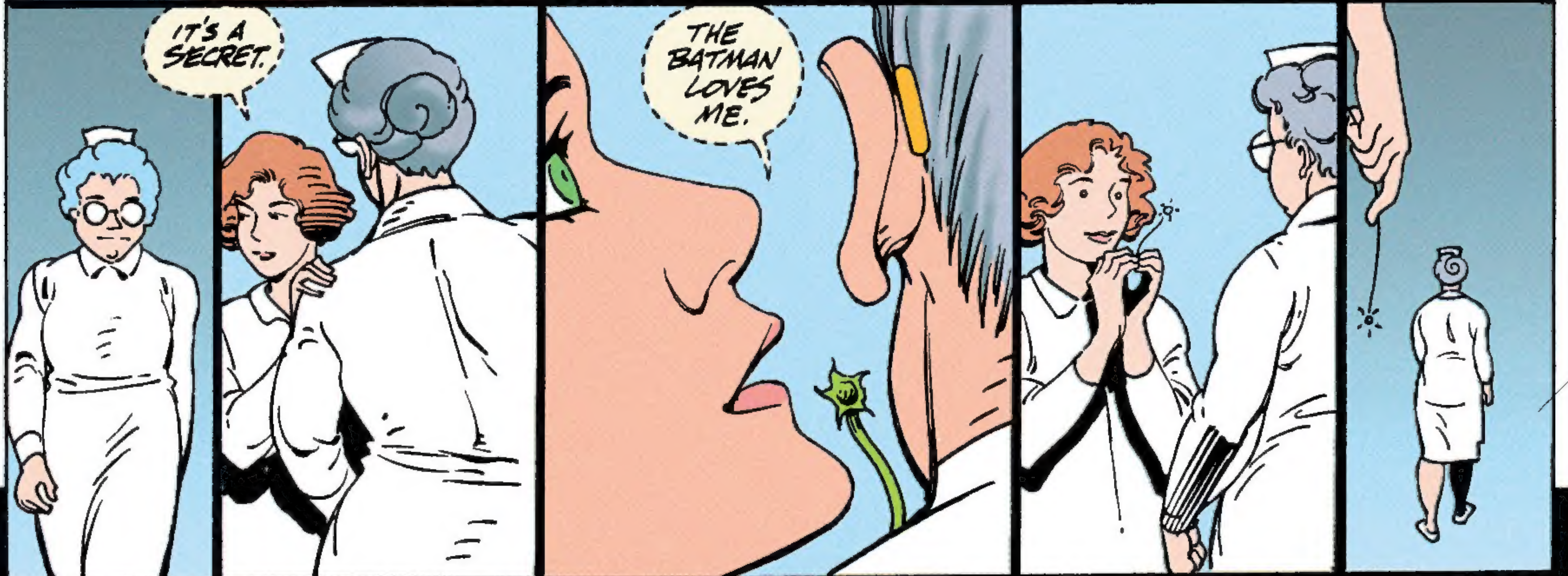
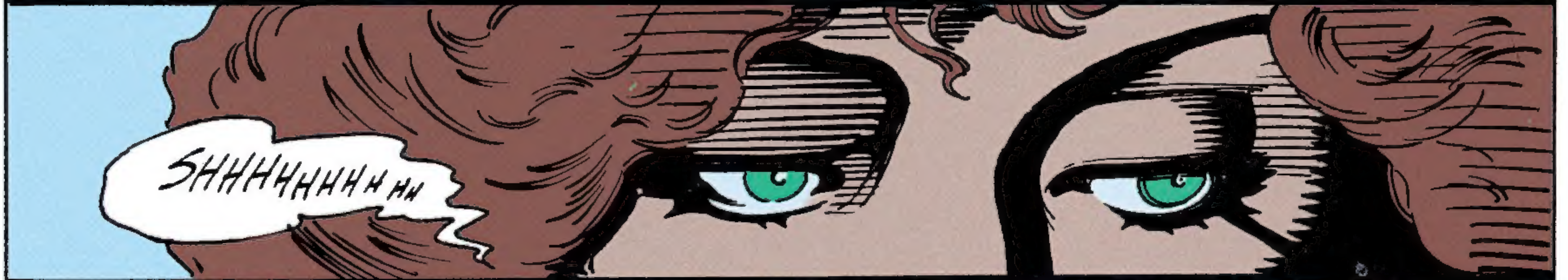
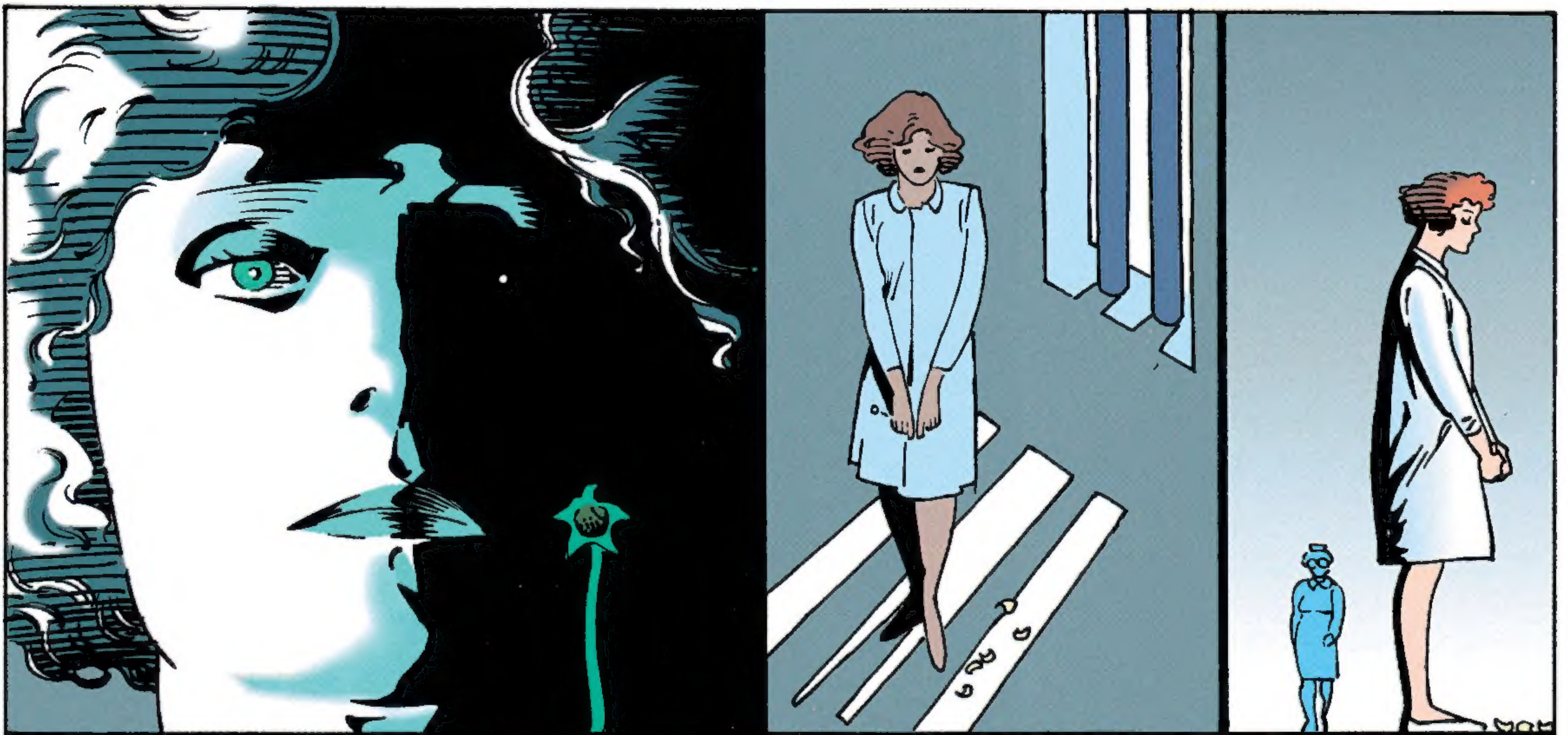
*--where it's easy to lose
all sense of reality--*

--and in doing so, lose YOURSELF.

Somewhere in that emotional MINEFIELD...

Pamela Isley wanders--





END

JOHN FRANCIS MOORE
writer

P. CRAIG RUSSELL
artist

DIGITAL CHAMELEON
colors
GOODWIN & KAPLAN
edits

BILL PEARSON
letters

BATMAN
created by
BOB KANE